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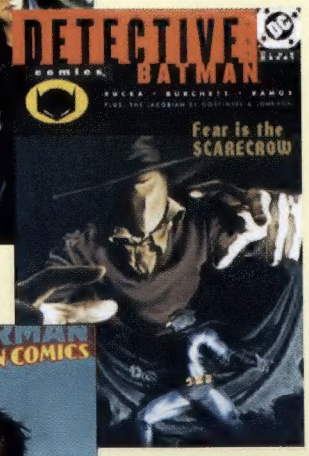

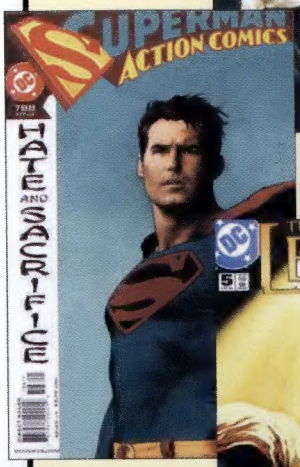

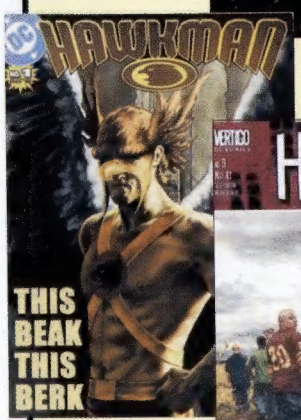

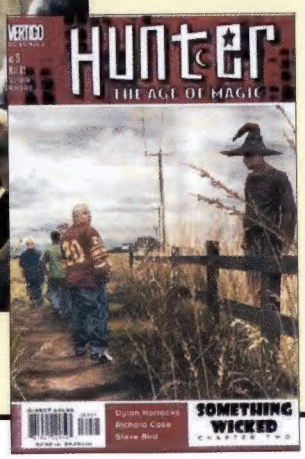

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A Quality Communications magazine

#160 JULY 2003

Inside this issue

COVER: Alex Ross and Paul Dini return to the world of the Justice League in a sequel to last year's **JLA: Secret Origins** oversized special with the November-shipping 96 page **JLA: Liberty and Justice**. Mirroring recent comics trends, Ross promises a "real world" story for DC's big seven heroes. For the full details, see page 13

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Sez Dez

Editorial
Dez Skinn

OK, I'm biased. Let's get that out of the way first. Printer's ink instead of blood running through my veins, and all that. Much as I love the Internet's potential as a research and information tool, I'm a print man. I just don't see print ever being replaced, because I don't think it's in competition with the monitor.

Many companies have fallen into the vanity trap. They've thrown fortunes at the Net, attempting to set up the best websites ever, way beyond the actual basic information needed. Style above content, pride before a fall, cliches abound. And let's not forget quantity above quality. There's so damn much of it. Unexpurgated, sprawling, voluminous. It just goes on forever.

You can start out checking a single fact and before you know what's happened, those damn links have sucked you in and you've lost four hours of the day. Worse, you find so many contradictions, you're worse off than when you started.

Try searching for the correct spelling of the Silver Surfer's real name. I had a blind spot and thought the Net would provide the quickest answer. I tried six different versions of Norrin Rad, all were successful, but Norrin Radd won, with almost 4,000 entries. The only problem was most were for a German rock band. So I went back to checking in print, because it's more definitive. Print costs money so generally, it's painstakingly checked and double checked because once it's out there it can't be changed the next day. I often advise people not to leap into print. Their first attempts will be, or should be, their worst. And they'll be around to haunt the author/artist for the rest of their lives. You can't rewrite print.

When we published in print the Brother Matthew strip, originally conceived for the Net, the creators said it had become "real". When we ran a CI survey last year, we found that only 50% of our readers even have Internet access. And those who do spend only one hour on average on comics sites.

Perhaps editor-in-chief Joe Quesada put it into context best when asked why Marvel doesn't produce more comics on the web. "The Net is overrated," he said – in an Internet interview. "We did the math and we figured that we are reaching about one percent of our constituents through the Net."

Guess printed comics are here to stay!

***Comics International** editor Dez Skinn's career in the industry spans over 30 years. Titles he has created include **Doctor Who Weekly**, **House of Hammer**, **Hulk Comic**, **Starburst** and **Warrior**. Ex-editorial director of Marvel UK – where his Stan Lee-coined Sez Dez column had a monthly audience of over 500,000 – he has also edited titles including **Buster**, **Conan**, **MAD**, **Star Wars Weekly**, **2000 AD Presents**, **Miracleman** and **Spider-Man** and won over 20 Eagle Awards. A contributor to several lifestyle magazines and consultant on a new Thames TV series, his co-created **V for Vendetta** is under option to Warner Bros.*

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Marvel looks to sell mini on Neil Gaiman's name alone

I have lived for almost seventeen years.
I die tomorrow.
And this is what hurts the most:
That I shall die on the ground.
That I shall never take to the skies again,
to dance, to laugh,
to *fly*...

*Secrecy over content as promotion focuses on **Sandman** creator's involvement in **1602** eight-parter*

SEEMINGLY out to steal DC's thunder, Marvel is set to launch its Neil Gaiman-written **1602** mere weeks before the British-born writer makes his highly publicised return to his signature series, **The Sandman** *[see below]*.

As if to reinforce its marketing ploy, Marvel is promoting the eight-parter almost exclusively on the writer's name. The content and even the very nature of the Marvel Knights comic – Gaiman's first work for the New York-based publisher since 1994's **Alice Cooper: The Last Temptation** – is being kept under wraps.

Feeding speculation about **1602**, Gaiman was delightfully obtuse in his solicitation copy. Reporting a conversation he had about the series, he gave absolutely nothing away as the following extract reveals:

"Yes, but the story... What is it about?' "Oh, you know," I said. "Stuff." "Well, is it the Marvel characters? Or characters you invented yourself?" "Yes," I said. "That's pretty much it."

Everything changes

In an attempt to elicit some firmer details about **1602**, **CI** approached assistant editor Nick Lowe. A little more forthcoming, he said Gaiman pitched the initial idea to Joe Quesada after constantly being pestered by the Marvel editor-in-chief to write something big for the company.

"This is a really cool *real* Marvel story. This is not a **What If...** This is the Marvel Universe," said Lowe, who added that everyone is in it. "Well, except Man-Thing."

Although unwilling to explain the title, when asked the significance of **1602**'s *Everything changes* slogan, Lowe said the eight-parter is intended to change the way people think of the Marvel Universe. He also stated that repercussions would be felt in the regular MU comics.

All ages adventure

Although the series falls under the Marvel Knights mature readers umbrella, Lowe stressed that **1602** is an all-ages title. "Neil's expertise makes it accessible to all ages and interesting to all ages. It is a straight out adventure book."

"Due to Neil's widespread popularity it should attract a wider readership than most comics. It's not everyday that a **New York Times** best-selling author and Hugo and Nebula award winner writes a mainstream comic book," he concluded.

1602 is pencilled by Andy Kubert and digitally embellished by his **Origin** colourist Richard Isanove *[see first interior page, left]*.

***Marvel 1602** #1, priced $3.50, ships on August 13.*

Vertigo's Endless celebration

A HIGH profile project has drawn Neil Gaiman back to **The Sandman** mythos on which he carved his reputation.

The British writer – now an American resident – is planning to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Vertigo, DC's mature reader imprint, with **The Sandman: Endless Nights**, a 160-page anthology, which includes work by a host of international artists. Contributing to the volume are Italian Milo Manara, Spain's Miguelanxo Prado and Glenn Fabry and Frank Quitely from Britain as well as America's P Craig Russell, Barron Storrey and Bill Sienkiewicz.

Dave McKean provides a wraparound cover *[see right]* to the 7¼x10¾" hardcover, which contains seven stories – each spotlighting a different member of the family of entities known as the Endless. Alongside a tale of Dream – aka Morpheus, the Sandman – are strips starring Death, Desire, Delirium, Despair, Destruction and Destiny.

***The Sandman: Endless Nights** hardcover, priced $24.95, ships on September 17.*

Image acquires TV Who spin-off

A CONCEPT introduced in the BBC's line of **Doctor Who** novels is being taken outside of the confines, and presumably copyright, of the TV time lord.

Created by Lawrence Miles, the Faction Paradox is a group of time terrorists, trying to subvert the whole of history to its own ends. Embroiled in a power struggle with other time travelling organisations and powers – each seeking to usurp the timeline and get one up on their opponents – the Faction first appeared in the prolific author's **Doctor Who: Alien Bodies** [1997].

Book of War

Now freed of its association with *Doctor Who*, the Faction is set to star not only in its own series of novels from Mad Norwegian Press but also in an ongoing Image series. Joining the author on the comic is Jim Calafiore – who illustrated **Faction Paradox: The Book of the War**, the guidebook to the Faction universe published by Mad Norwegian in 2002 – and inker Peter Palmiotti, who worked with the penciller on DC's **Aquaman**.

"Faction Paradox and its rivals aren't interested in dominating territory," stated series editor Lars Pearson, "They're trying to conquer *history*. Imagine that for a moment – a conflict between time-active groups across the whole of space-time. It begs the question if anyone can really *win* this battle, since each organisation can simply travel back in time and retro-actively undo its defeats."

Miles says the first story arc takes place across the span of the War of the Revolution. "That's an incredibly important time for the western world. Obviously it's the period that births the US, but at the same time you have got Kings and Popes dying in mysterious circumstances, at least one monarch losing his mind and various bizarre cults becoming fashionable all over the planet. By 1774, history's coming apart at the seams. Things from *outside* history get in, and they're strange and they're worrying and they're not entirely human."

According to Pearson the Faction has a distinct advantage in the conflict: "They're complete bastards. I say that even though their rivals are often worse. Even so, the Faction wanders through history like a New Orleans-style voodoo cult, quietly eliminating anyone who gets in their way. While, for now, the Faction's unseen rivals actually follow the Laws of Time, the Faction's got no such restraint. Hell, they're hoping their rivals will massacre each other, then swoop in and claim whatever spoils they can find."

Frothy blood bath

"It's also fair to say," the editor continued, "that everyone – Faction Paradox, the colonial Americans, et al – starts out the comic series thinking they're in complete control. But naturally, that notion quickly goes to hell, leading to a frothy blood bath in just a few issues."

***Faction Paradox** #1, priced $2.95, ships on August 6.*

Crimelord's history revealed

THE miniseries described as "*The Sopranos* meets *The Godfather* Part II Marvel-style " is being upgraded to ongoing before the first issue even hits the stands.

Written by **Incredible Hulk**'s Bruce Jones with art by Sean (**Sleeper**) Phillips and Frank Miller's **Daredevil** collaborator Klaus Janson, **Kingpin** follows the violent early life of Wilson Fisk. A shrewd young man who built his Manhattan crime empire the old-fashioned way, one dead body at a time, he will one day rise to become the Kingpin of Crime.

Responding to a question from **CI**, Jones said, "I don't think the industry perception that villains can't support their own titles is as true as it might have been. As Disney always said, heroes are important, but it's the villains that carry the show. Movies have been making villain-oriented films since *Little Casear* and probably before that.

"It isn't as simple, in my opinion, as what the protagonist's moral character might be," continued the writer. "It's more about how he deals with it and how it affects those around him. I mean, we're not talking about a serial killer here – but someone who simply handles business in a slightly more exotic way than most entrepreneurs. And it really is all about business."

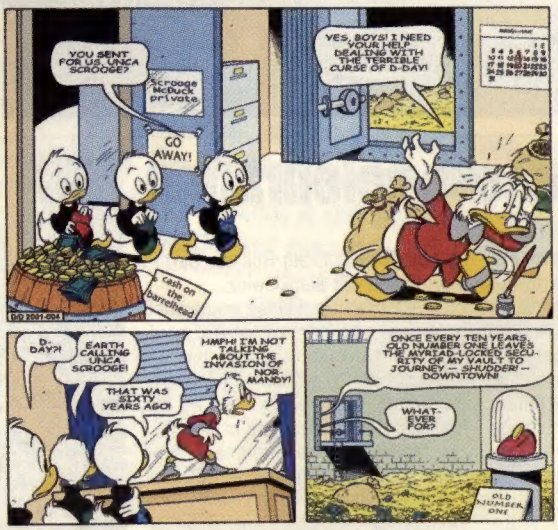
***Kingpin** #1, priced $2.50, ships on June 11.*

"Duck Man" tales unearthed

*Gemstone's **Uncle Scrooge Comics** revival to feature three European-produced strips based on unpublished stories written by Carl Barks*

DISNEY comics fans are to get the opportunity to read new material based on strips left incomplete by Carl Barks.

The three stories plotted by the acknowledged master of Disney Duck tales are being scripted by longtime Barks scholar Geoffrey Blum on behalf of Egmont, the Disney Corporation's European licensor. Gemstone – the Diamond Comics Distributor subsidiary which recently acquired the US rights to such titles as **Walt Disney's Comics and Stories** – is to publish them in America.


YOU SENT FOR US, UNCA SCROOGE?
Scrooge McDuck private
GO AWAY!
YES, BOYS! I NEED YOUR HELP DEALING WITH THE TERRIBLE CURSE OF D-DAY!
cash on the barrelhead
D-DAY?!
EARTH CALLING UNCA SCROOGE!
THAT WAS SIXTY YEARS AGO!
HMPH! I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT THE INVASION OF NORMANDY!
ONCE EVERY TEN YEARS, OLD NUMBER ONE LEAVES THE MYSTEAD-LOCKED SECURITY OF MY VAULT TO JOURNEY -- SHUDDER! -- DOWNTOWN!
WHATEVER FOR?
OLD NUMBER ONE

Above: Carlos Mota and Cleber Salles's art from Dime and Dime Again, *the two-parter running in **Uncle Scrooge Comics** #321-322.*

Already complete is *Dime and Dime Again*, a two-part adventure to be serialised beginning in the 48-page **Uncle Scrooge** #321. It is drawn by Carlos Mota and Cleber Salles.

The other two stories – *Powerplay on Killmotor Hill* drawn by Massimo Fecchi and *Race for the Golden Apples* illustrated by Daan Jippes – are not yet scheduled. The former is taken from a synopsis for a *Scrooge McDuck* cartoon Barks wrote in 1955 while the latter comes from his recollections of a lost script.

***Uncle Scrooge** #321, priced $6.95, ships in August.*

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Fresh source material sustains wave

Publishers focus on arcade computer games for new inspiration after licensing most popular 1980s action figure and TV cartoon properties

TRANSFORMERS... G.I. Joe... ThunderCats... Masters of the Universe... Voltron... Micronauts... Battle of the Planets... Robotech... The list of franchises resurrected from the 1980s for 30-somethings anxious to recapture their youth continues to grow.

With a still-buoyant market, but pickings from the action figure and TV cartoon areas growing increasingly slim, some publishers have taken to exploring peripheral pop culture avenues in their bid to acquire further licences – ones that will strike a chord with the same audience.

Independently UDON Studios, MVCreations and DreamWave Productions have hit on the same theme. Each of them has acquired comicbook rights to highly popular arcade games from the 1980s.

Don Bluth

First out of the gate is *Masters of the Universe* licensee MVCreations, which has two $2.95 six-parters scheduled to debut through CG Entertainment in August.

Both titles are based on innovative games created in 1983 by animator Don Bluth, possibly best-known for *An American Tail*, *Anastasia* and *Titan A.E.*.

The first arcade game to blend traditional animation and interactive video game play, ***Dragon's Lair*** – which cost $1.3 million and took 6 years to develop – was a huge hit with over 30 million plays in the first 40 days of release. It was very quickly joined by ***Space Ace***.

Such was the games' popularity that Ruby Spears created animated TV shows based around each. Launched in the Saturday morning slot in 1984, neither series lasted beyond its first season.

Infanto Ray

To adapt the SF-based ***Space Ace*** to comics for the first time, MVCreations has teamed up **Tech Jacket** writer Robert Kirkman with Brazilian Disney artist Paulo Borges. Their **Space Ace: Defender of the Universe** picks up where the game left off, with Dexter – aka Ace – and his space-babe Kimmy having adopted their arch-enemy Commander Borf, who has been regressed to a baby by his own Infanto Ray.

But the ray is also affecting Ace and, adding to the couple's troubles, another villain is on their trail.

Dragon's revenge

The Virgina-based CGE client's **Dragon's Lair** mini features the return of all three characters from the 20 year-old game: Dirk the Daring, Princess Daphne and Singe. Subtitled **Singe's Revenge**, the story of Daphne's kidnap by the deadly dragon is written by Andy Mangels, a **Star Trek** novelist who has also scripted such comics as **Nightmares on Elm Street** and **Star Wars: Bobba Fett Twin Engines of Destruction**. It is drawn by another Brazilian artist, Fabio Laguna, whose credits include many titles for Rob Liefeld's Extreme Image imprint – most notably **Maximage** – as well as fill-ins on several Marvel series.

Street Fighter

Until now the Canada-based artists' collective known as UDON Studios has concentrated on producing comics for such clients as Top Cow, WildStorm and Marvel with **Battle of the Planets**, **Robotech**, **Deadpool** and **Taskmaster** among the titles to its credit.

The studio is now making its first move towards creating its own comics with the acquisition of the license for the *Street Fighter* game.

One of the most popular arcade games of the 1980s, the Capcom action fighting game features different characters from around the world participating in a massive tournament. Each fighter has a unique history and their own special moves, making the game more exciting than the side scrolling shooting games that were commonplace when *Street Fighter* was first released.

X-Men tie-in

The game's characters proved so popular that a number of crossover games have been produced, incorporating various other popular properties, among them Marvel's X-Men and Spider-Man.

Street Fighter's success also resulted in three separate attempts to translate it to comics for the US market although it wasn't until 1993 that Malibu issued its three-issue **Street Fighter**. This was followed in 1994 by Viz/Tokuma's eight-issue **Street Fighter II** and in 1995 by a DC one-shot, **Street Fighter: The Battle for Shadaloo**.

*Above: Pat Dukes' cover art to the first issue of **Space Ace: Defender of the Universe**. Below left: Tony Washington's's cover art for **Dragon's Lair: Singe's Revenge** #1. Based on Don Bluth arcade games, both $2.95 MVCreations six-parters are launching through CG Entertainment in August.*

Star Wars

"*Street Fighter* is a landmark in arcade and console video games," said UDON's chief of operations, Erik Ko. "It defines the combat fight-ing game genre that is still very popular nowadays. And the *SF* franchise is alive and well after almost 15 years, with various incarnations of the game still available in arcades and home console systems.

"Essentially," continued Ko, "*Street Fighter* is to video games what *Star Wars* is to film. Everyone who has played video games is familiar with *Street Fighter*. And with various generations of the *SF* games available, it has created a whole universe of characters and everyone who has played the game loves at least one or two of them."

UDON is to release its **Street Fighter** comic through Image. Kicking off with a preview book in August, the series proper launches in September.

It is written by Ken Siu-Chong, who told **CI** that **Street Fighter** is about the warriors from around the world – be they martial artist, boxer or wrestler – who, by their self-determination and training, have pushed – and sometimes exceeded – the boundaries of what is humanly possible. "What drives these fighters to such extremes and how they decide to use their power will be explored throughout the series."

Superhero genre

Siu-Chong, whose credits include **Taskmaster** and **Robotech**, added that he had

*Above: Chun Li as depicted by Joy Ang for UDON Studios' Image comic, **Street Fighter**.*

# of nostalgia revivals

not found it particularly difficult to translate the game to the printed page. "You can actually draw comparisons between *Street Fighter* and the superhero genre of comicbooks. *Street Fighter* has a huge cast of unique characters, each with distinct personalities, back stories, and, of course, superhuman abilities. The only difference is that the characters' abilities were brought about through training and not cosmic rays or genetic mutation."

Hong Kong kung fu

"Actually," he admitted, "the most difficult part of transplanting *Street Fighter* into a comic has just been trying to digest more than a decade's worth of material to create a storyline that will please both new and old fans.

"*Street Fighter* takes place in a world similar to ours, excluding the fighter's superhuman abilities of course," explained the writer. "I guess you could look at it as taking place in the universe of a Hong Kong kung fu movie, without the wires."

According to Siu-Chong, his story begins a few years after the events of *Street Fighter I*, but slightly before the events of *Street Fighter II*. "For those familiar with the games, that places us roughly in the *Street Fighter Alpha* era."

Global crime

"While the ongoing series will focus on many of the characters from the *SF* Universe, our first story arc will primarily involve Ryu, Ken, Chun-Li and Guile," he added. "Ryu is the wandering warrior who is at the centre of the various plot threads. He and his hot-headed American friend are reunited when their master is mysteriously murdered and they obviously want to get to the bottom of it. Meanwhile, Chun-Li's father – an undercover Interpol agent – and Guile's friend, Charlie – a US Special Forces member – have vanished. The only thing that they both know is that the disappearances have something to do with a global crime syndicate called Shada-loo.

UDON's **Street Fighter** is to be illustrated by Alvin (**Deadpool**) Lee and **Marvel Mangaverse: Avengers Assemble**'s Arnold Tsang, who alternate on the series.

While UDON has the rights to *Street Fighter*, the licences for several other Capcom games have been acquired by the Canadian-based **Transformers** publisher headed by Pat Lee.

More Capcom

DreamWave Productions is developing a line of titles based on a range of games including *Mega Man*, *Devil May Cry*, *Rival Schools*, *Maximo* and *Darkstalkers*.

First up is **Mega Man**. Written by **Out There**'s Brian Augustyn, it is drawn by Hong Kong artist Michael Fong, a newcomer to American comics readers.

The writer told **CI** the comic is inspired more by the original two-dimensional, side-scrolling addition to the action platformer genre – with elements of the *Mega Man X* storyline blended in – than it is by the *Mega Man Legends* or the *Mega Man Exe* series of 3D adventure/action games.

Explaining that Capcom has authorised the expansion and development of the *Mega Man* milieu for the comic, Augustyn said he had added the context of the life the boy robot leads when he is not being a hero as well as expanding on such aspects from the game as Doctor Light, his kindly creator.

Robot dog

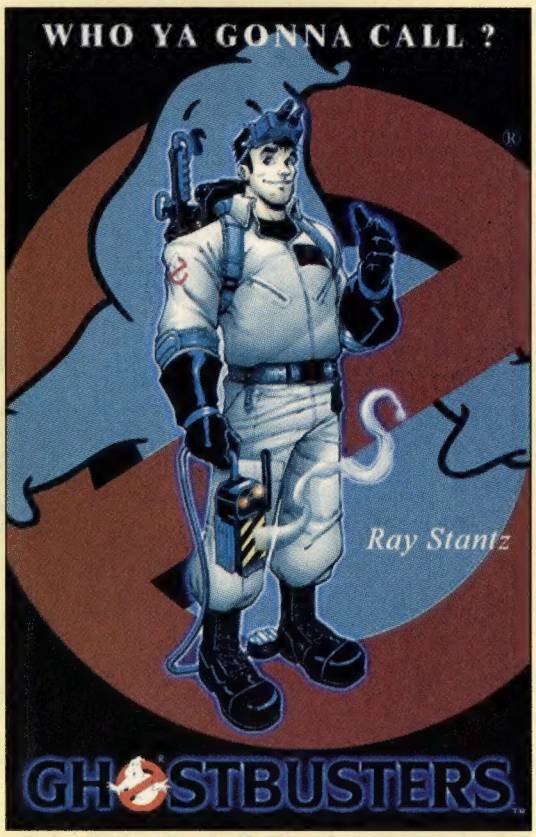
"Also his robot sister and his robot dog," added the co-creator of DC's **Impulse** with a chuckle. "It's a near future world in which robotics has become the main industry."

Augustyn, who admitted there were echoes of Carlo Collodi's **Pinocchio** and Osamu Tezuka's **Astro Boy** in **Mega Man**, said he had decided it would be fun to expand on the secret identity aspects. "Here is this robot boy, who in his costumed identity has saved the city in which he lives countless times from evil robots and other threats. But on some levels he's just a kid, one who is being sent into the world to learn how to fit in, how to be human with all of the frightening aspects of that cast against the sense of being a fish out of water.

"Like any boy, he's going to junior high school. It's very much the idea of a new kid in town, trying to fit in, being picked on but having to hide this great power," he added. "And wanting desperately to find that place where the humanity behind the machine can assert itself."

Augustyn, who said the comic emulates the art style of the games, added, "We're aiming for big, high-spirited, over-the-top adventure where the danger will come from the size and scope of the threat rather than the nastiness of its weapons."

Above: Shane Law's ***Street Fighter*** *promo art. Top left: The artist's interpretation of Balrog for the Image/UDON Studios title.*



Newcomer chooses 1980s movie option

WHILE longer established publishers have been battling over the rights to action figures, animated TV shows and arcade games from the 1980s, a newcomer has shown there are worthwhile nostalgia-laden licences to be had in other areas.

88 MPH Studios, the Canadian-based producer of **Genesis**, the first **Transformers** art book, has acquired the rights to publish comics based on the 1984 movie *Ghostbusters*. Directed by Ivan Reitman, the scare comedy starred Dan Ackroyd, Bill Murray and Harold Ramis as a trio of spirit exterminators who tried to rid New York of its ghost infestation.

The movie was followed by a 1989 sequel and two cartoon series – DiC Entertainment's *The Real Ghostbusters* [also known as *Slimer and the Real Ghostbusters*], which aired from 1986 to 1987 and Adelaide Productions' 1997 series, *Extreme Ghostbusters*.

Three comic spin-offs from the DiC series were published: First's **Ghostbusters** [six issues, 1987] and Now's **Real Ghostbusters** [32, 1988-91] and **Slimer** [19, 1989-91].

Beyond announcing it will have an autumn debut, 88 MPH has yet to reveal any details about its new title.

- Filmation also created a *Ghostbusters* cartoon, which originally ran from 1986 to 1987. An attempt to cash in on the *Ghostbusters* movie, it was, in fact, based on the studio's 1975 live-action children's TV series of the same name.

Marvel signs NYX artist

JOSH Middleton *[left]* has signed an exclusive one year contract with Marvel.

Already set up to be the regular cover artist on Marvel's revived **New Mutants**, the former **Meridian** penciller will also be drawing the unscheduled **NYX**. A previously aborted **X-Men** spin-off, it was to have been produced by Brian Wood and artist David Choe.

The terms of Middleton's deal allow him the freedom to continue work on **Sky Between Branches**, the creator-owned project first promoted by UK-based publisher Com.X in late 2001.

Death goes manga

SCARY Godmother creator Jill Thompson is returning to the realm created by Neil Gaiman for a story starring **The Sandman** writer's version of Death.

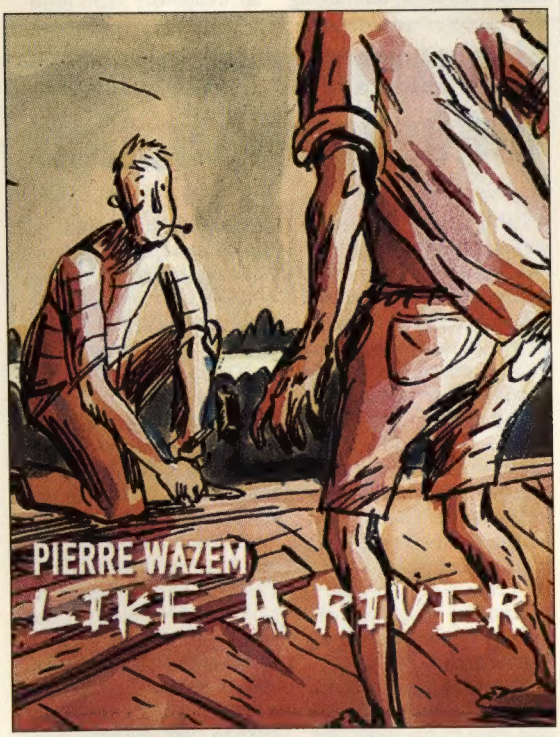
Based on the *Season of Mists* storyline *[from **Sandman** #22-28]*, Thompson's 208-page **At Death's Door** is not only produced in the *[5x7½"]* manga digest format but is also told in the *shojou* – girl's manga – style.

Written and illustrated in black and white with gray tones by Thompson, the story recounts what Death and her sisters were up to while their brother Dream – aka Morpheus, the Sandman – was deciding what to do with the key to Hell he had wrested from Lucifer.

● Thompson's other credits include several issues of **The Sandman** – notably #41-49, *Brief Lives* – as well as **The Little Endless Storybook**.

Above: Jill Thompson's cover art for Vertigo's 5x7½" (manga-sized) ***Death: At Death's Door*** *graphic novel.*

***At Death's Door**, priced $9.95, ships on July 16.*



HUMANOIDS is continuing its promotion of European artists with the first English-language publication of Pierre Wazem's black and white ***Like A River*** [cover above]. *The only one of the Swiss writer/artist's titles to be translated so far, the 108-page softcover tells how an unexpected visit by a long forgotten son prevents an old widower's suicide. The 6½x9" volume ships in August, priced $9.95.*

Snake blows back in

Hurricane Entertainment assigns ***Violent Messiahs*** *team to resurrect* Escape from New York *movie antihero as star of own bimonthly comic*

AS PART of an orchestrated effort to build a franchise around the character portrayed by Kurt Russell in John Carpenter's *Escape from New York* [1981] and *Escape from L.A.* [1996], Hurricane Entertainment is bringing Snake Plissken back into comics.

While others are working to feature the antihero in computer games, novels, an animé movie and the like, the **Violent Messiahs** producer has drafted in its creative team from the Image title to work on **John Carpenter's Snake Plissken Chronicles**. To be released through CrossGen Publishing, the bimonthly series is written by William O'Neil and drawn by Tone Rodriquez with inks from Digital Chameleon.

Publisher Jan Utstein told **CI** the comic is set in the 16-year gap between the two films. "The first story takes place literally the morning after *New York*. Snake has a Humvee and he is on his way back to Atlantic City, which is where the heist he was working on before his arrest is about to go down.

"In the future we might do some skipping around but right now we're planning chronological stories," she added. "Bill already has the next storyline set up to take place in Philadelphia – he's bent on working his way down the East Coast."

Originally scheduled to ship on June 25, the $2.99 first issue is on sale now.

● Marvel published a one-shot, **The Adventures of Snake Plissken**, in 1997.

Above, below and top: Tone Rodriquez interior art from the first issue of ***John Carpenter's Snake Plissken Chronicles.***

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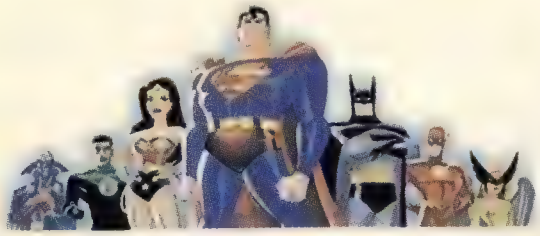

THE animated version of the JLA [above] *is captured on Inkworks'* **Justice League Premium** *trading cards. The 81-card base set is complemented by* Friends and Foes *foil cards,* World's Greatest Heroes *cards and* ActionWorks *lenticular cards as well as by* Sketch *cards. The boxes of 36 7-card packs ship on June 25.*

Touch of Frost

Above: Greg Horn's cover art for the first issue of Marvel's ongoing ***X-Men*** *spin-off,* ***Emma Frost.***

WHAT made Emma Frost the woman she is today is the question Karl Bollers is out to answer in an ongoing Marvel series that begins by exploring the early life of the X-Men's White Queen.

"We'll see the development of her powers, a bit of her family life and what it was like growing up with her," explained the former **Muties** writer, who is joined on **Emma Frost** by penciller Randy (**Witchblade**) Green.

Emma Frost *#1, priced $2.50, ships on July 9.*

Fourth for Future

PEACEKEEPER brings industry veterans Bob Layton, David Michelinie and Dick Giordano to the four titles they announced as their target when they founded Future Comics in 2001.

The series, which joins **Freemind**, **Metallix** and **Deathmask**, is written by Layton with Michelinie on board as co-plotter. It is illustrated by Marvel **Micronauts** penciller Pat Broderick and acclaimed **Uncanny X-Men** inker Terry Austin.

James Bond

Describing the comic to **CI**, Layton – the one-time Valiant Comics head best-known for writing and drawing Marvel's **Iron Man** – said, "It's kind of The Lone Ranger meets James Bond... with a little *Star Wars* thrown in."

Adding that the series was inspired by Bond and Jim Steranko, Layton continued, "I wanted to bring something to the Future Comics Universe that had that same global feel and fun to it as **Nick Fury** and 007. Both David and I love the 'Good Bond Movies' and decided to do something in that vein – except with next generation technology. And Steranko did the perfect spy comic with **S.H.I.E.L.D.**, something that has also influenced me greatly as a storyteller. That and, I'm rather fond of non-powered heroes."

Above: An extract from Pat Broderick and Terry Austin's cover art for the third issue of Future Comics' ***Peacekeeper.***

Peacekeeper *#1, priced $2.99, ships in July.*

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Ross and Dini reunite with JLA

Award-winning artist/writer team follow last year's ***Secret Origins*** *graphic novel with* ***Liberty and Justice*** *for 2003*

FANS of Alex Ross and Paul Dini are to get twice as much from the artist and writer's follow up to 2002's **JLA: Secret Origins** softcover.

Rather than the 48 pages of last year's tabloid-sized [10x13½"] one-shot, the new **JLA: Liberty and Justice** runs to 96 pages.

"Ever since I was a teenager, I'd have dreams of illustrating an oversized superhero epic, starring the Big Seven of the Justice League," the **Kingdom Come** artist commented. "I've actually had these fantasies about a huge book that you could sit down and read and feel as though you've been taken across the world."

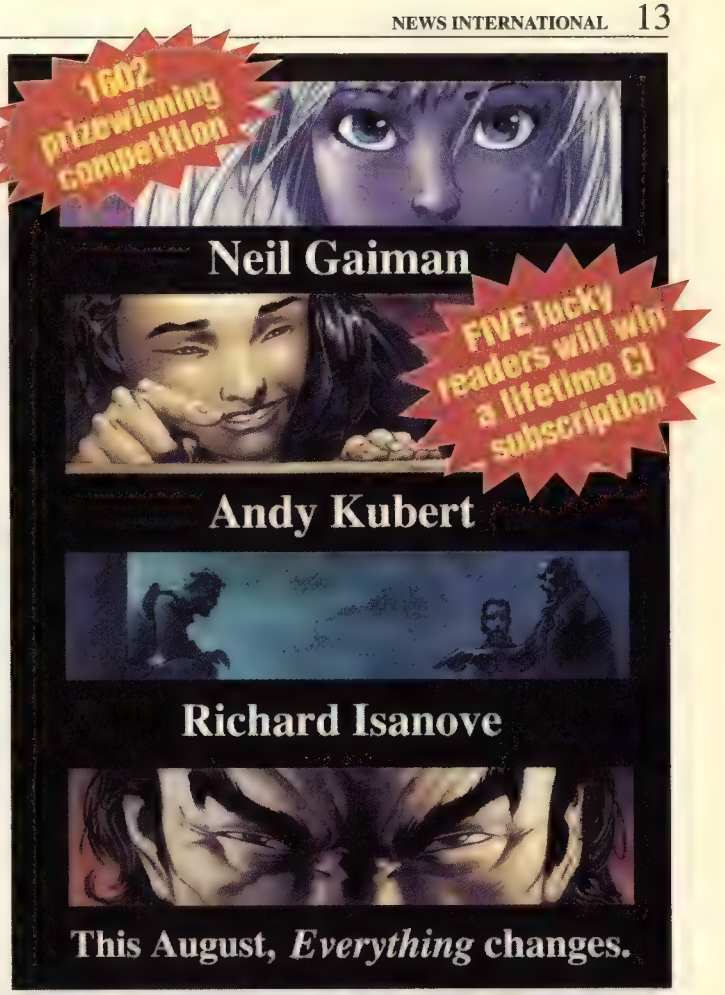
And, in keeping with the current vogue, it is the real world Ross means as he and Dini are set upon making the saga as believable as possible. "This is our attempt to do an ultra-realistic story where it seems as though the JLA are operating in the real world with real world limitations and surroundings."

Ross added, "In the world of the JLA that I envision, they realistically are such busy people that the true adventures happen when they all have to come together."

JLA: Liberty and Justice is scheduled for a November release.

Above: DC's $59.95 **JLA: Liberty and Justice Collector's Plate**, *which ships on December 3; art by Alex Ross. Below: Ross's combined visual for the covers to the various previews of its* ***JLA: Liberty and Justice*** *graphic novel DC will offer at conventions this summer.*

CUT OUT COUPON ALONG DOTTED LINE



...but changes into what? You've heard the gossip and read the news story on page 5 this issue. The teaser ad appears above and the cover to #1 right. So what do you think 1602 is all about? Tell us in 30 words or less, and the winner will be the one with the most accurate (or, failing that, the wittiest) prediction.

I THINK 1602 WILL BE ABOUT:

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The winners' replies and details will be published in Comics International #162

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My five favourite features this issue are (please mark in order as *1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th* – no ticks):

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All entries must be postmarked before July 15th, 2003

Moore Smax for ABC

THE FIRST spin-off from Alan Moore's **Top 10** comic moves the action away from the futuristic city of Neopolis to a planet where magic still holds sway and elves and trolls mingle with the world's humanoid inhabitants.

Written by Moore and illustrated by **Top 10** inker – and **Replacement God** creator – Zander Cannon, **Smax** is an America's Best Comics five-parter which begins when Jeff Smax learns of his beloved uncle's death.

*Above: Zander Cannon's cover art for the first issue of ABC's **Smax** five-parter.*

Accompanied by his fellow police officer and partner, Robyn Slinger – nicknamed Toybox because of the toy-sized automatons she controls, the blue giant leaves the Top 10 precinct and heads for the home he has not been back to in years.

Discussing the storyline, Cannon, who describes the mini as a parody of fantasy in the same way as **Top 10** is a parody of superhero and science fiction comics, said "It seems that Jeff has left some things unfinished in his home dimension. He was once the greatest of all dragon slayers, but there is one dragon left unslain. Also, his father was a bit of trouble. And his twin sister."

● **Top 10** penciller Gene Ha is working with Moore on another spin-off from the series, **The 49ers**. A graphic novel, it is still unscheduled.

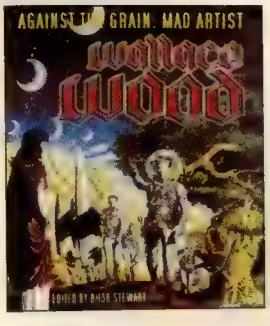
***Smax** #1, priced $2.95, ships on August 20.*

Wood spotlighted

JACK Kirby Collector publisher TwoMorrows is dedicated to promulgating the history of American comics through such magazines as **Alter Ego** and **Comic Book Artist** – soon to be a Top Shelf title – as well as a line of books, which already includes **Beck & Schaffenberger: Sons of Thunder** and the recently launched **Modern Masters** series.

An August addition to its range is the $39.95 **Against the Grain: MAD Artist Wallace Wood**. Described as a biographical memoir of life at the Wood Studio, the 336-page softcover – which includes a colour section – traces the life and career of a man whose extensive credits include E.C. Comics and the creation of **T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents**.

Edited by longtime Wood associate Bhob Stewart, it



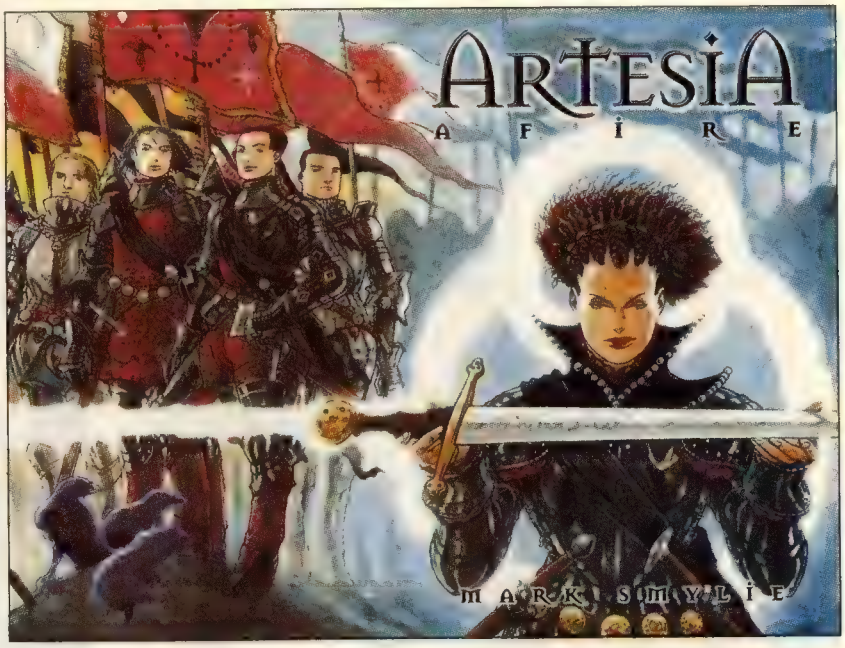
features contributions from many artists and writers who knew Wood personally. The artwork includes childhood drawings and early samples as well as numerous comics pages – many previously unpublished.

Against the Grain is also available for $59.95 as a limited edition hardcover. This includes an extra 16 pages of colour as well as bonus black and white plates.

Free checklist

TwoMorrows is also issuing a **Wally Wood Checklist**.

The comicbook-sized 64-pager details all of the artist's published work. It is priced $5.95 but available free when ordering **Against the Grain** direct from the publisher.



Artesia breaks away

***The Book of Dooms** saga leaves Sirius as writer/artist Mark Smylie takes self-publishing route with his epic sword and sorcery biography*

AFTER four years and two miniseries, Mark Smylie is moving from Sirius Entertainment the series he describes as "an attempt at a sword and sorcery fantasy epic one might normally find in novel form, but as a comicbook".

The writer/artist will release **Afire** – the third six-issue chapter in his **Artesia** saga – through his Archaia Studios Press rather than convert the painted comic to black and white, as Sirius had requested.

Discussing the saga with **CI**, Smylie said, "It's a fantasy biography, if you will. The story of a woman and her role in the end of one Age and the start of the next."

Die by the sword

"Artesia was born of a witch and raised as one in the Middle Kingdoms, but saw her mother burned at the stake and ran away to the Highlands of Daradja to choose the path of war rather than that of magic. She'd rather die by the sword than on a witch's pyre," he explained. "She's become a war captain and now a Queen, and finds herself aiding the Middle Kingdoms against a common enemy, the Empire of Thessid-Gola, whose Sultan wants to restore the Empire to its former glory.

"In some ways **Artesia** is actually a war comic, about medieval and Renaissance war-fighting in a world with magic and divine intervention," Smylie added. "The world is a fantasy setting but it's based on our own, as a kind of Renaissance-era world in which monotheism never really took hold, or at least not in the same way as it did in ours."

*Above: From **Artesia Afire** #1, Artesia and her allies come to parley with the Emir of the Thessid northern vanguard; Mark Smylie art.*

Book of Dooms

Smylie said the whole story is intended as one narrative sequence, each series flowing into the next. "I hope to write a total of 22 Artesia series, with the whole of it called *The Book of Dooms*."

The first $3.50 issue of **Artesia Afire** ships in June as does Archaia's 192-page trade paperback collecting the first [1997] **Artesia** six-parter. It is priced $24.95 as is the **Artesia Afield** trade paperback, which follows in July. Another 192-pager, it reprints the second [2000] six-issue series.

Smylie plans to continue the saga in the fourth book, titled **Artesia Besieged**.

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In Brief

ALTHOUGH refusing to comment on circulating rumours that it may be about to abort the series, DC has pulled its revival of the Tower Comics super-team created by Wally Wood from the schedule.

Written by Marc Andreyko with art by Manuel Garcia and Jimmy Palmiotti, the 40-page **New T.H.U.N.D.E.R. Agents** #1 was to have shipped on June 4. No date has been announced as to when the $2.95 comic may appear.

AGENT X is the latest Marvel title to get a reprieve although this one may turn out to be just a stay of execution.

Cancelled with #12, the series is to get a fresh lease of life with the original creative team of writer Gail Simone and UDON Studio's Alvin Lee and Rob Ross returning to the comic. Their $2.99 #13 ships on August 20.

THE **BATTLE Pope** team of writer Robert Kirkman and artist Tony Moore are getting back together for a 48-page Image one-shot, **Brit**.

Kirkman says the title's star is the tough-as-nails, take-no-shit, bastard of the armed forces. "He's the US Government's last line of defence. Whenever really rough shit goes down... he's the one they call, but he's old as hell... and things are really going down hill for him. It's an 'end of an era' story that shows Brit going through the roughest times of his life... his final days as the government's golden boy."

The $4.95 special ships on July 2.

SALVADOR Larroca is leaving Marvel's flagship *Tsunami* title, **Namor**.

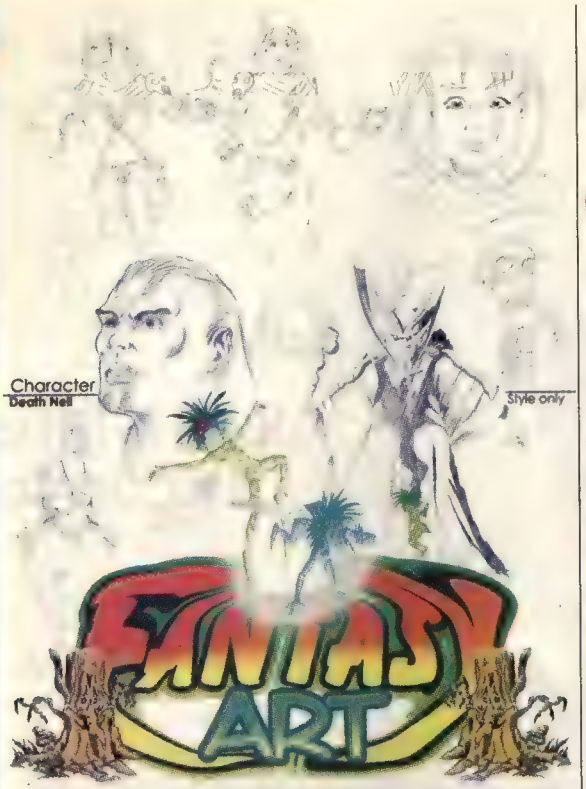
The Spanish artist – brought in to replace Japan's Mizuki Sakakibara before the series launched – is quitting after the September-shipping #6. His place is being taken by Pat Olliffe, currently finishing up **The Call**, recently truncated to a four-parter.

WILDSTORM is planning to make all 35 issues of a 1993 Image title available again.

The DC imprint is to collect the entirety of Sam Kieth's **The Maxx** in a series of trade paperbacks published through its Cliffhanger label. The 144-page first volume – which reprints issues #1-6 – ships on August 6, priced $17.95.

ED BENES has signed an exclusive two-year contract with DC.

Together with writer Gail Simone and inker Alex Lei, the former **Supergirl** penciller comprises the new **Birds of Prey** creative team. They take over the $2.50 DC title with #56, which ships on June 18.



*AN ARTIST who worked on **Transformers**, **Doctor Who** , **Zoids** and many other comics originated in the UK during the 1980s and '90s is conducting two free step-by-step courses on how to create your own characters. Tim Perkins' 10-hour* Fantasy Art *and 30-hour* Fantasy Art 2 *are being run in conjunction with Lancashire's Blackburn College. Further details can be obtained from www.blackburn.ac.uk or by telephoning the college on 01254 292929.*

AP adds two titles

IS A small St Albans-based publisher about to reinvigorate the ailing British comics industry single-handedly?

While the most recent contender, Com.X, continues to struggle against haphazard publishing schedules, former Chaos City Comics co-owner Richard Emms has been putting out **Monster Club**, his AP Comics' inaugural title, every month since he launched the Kit Wallis title and the fledgling publishing house last December.

*Above: Edu Francisco's cover art for the first issue of AP Comics' **Assassin School**.*

*Above: The cover to **Darkham Vale** #1; art by Jack Lawrence.*

Emms is now set to add two further mangaesque series, which he unveiled at Comics 2003 in Bristol.

Lined up to launch in July are the 10-issue **Darkham Vale** by newcomer Jack Lawrence and the six-issue **Assassin's School**. Drawn by Edu Francisco, the South American artist who drew the first issue of Image/Roaring Studios' **Legacy**, the latter is written by Emms' AP partner Phil Littler, who has a TV and animation background. His credits include directing the unscreened pilot for Gerry Anderson's aborted 1993 series, *G.F.I. – Gee Force Intergalactic*.

Both titles are priced £2.50/$3.50.

Rough Cut unleashes vampire secret agent

*Above: Jaeson Finn's promo art for **Rose Black**.*

GLASGOW-based Rough Cut Comics is to spotlight its first action/adventure character in its first graphic novel.

Described as an amalgam of *Modesty Blaise* and *The Matrix*, a *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* in reverse by the **Freedom Collective** publisher, **Rose Black** stars an 800-year-old vampire, who is a British Secret Service agent.

Although her 100-page graphic novel is currently unscheduled, she was unveiled at Comics 2003 in Bristol in a £4.99 issue #0 written by Edward Murphy and Tom Campbell with art by Jaeson Finn and Colin Barr.

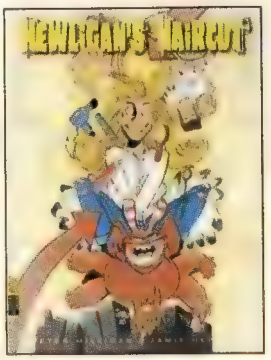
2000 AD graphic novels come home

WITH its contract with Titan Books coming to an end, the publisher of **2000 AD** is to launch its own line of graphic novels reprinting material from the 26 year-old British weekly and its companion monthly, **Judge Dredd Megazine**.

Rebellion intends for its titles to feature not only such high profile characters as Judge Dredd, Strontium Dog and Nikolai Dante but also one-off series and fan-favourite stories that have not previously been reprinted

The range kicks off with two colour hardcovers – John Wagner and Arthur Ranson's 88-page **Button Man: The Killing Ground** and the 48-page **Hewligan's Haircut** by Pete Milligan and Jamie Hewlett – and a black and white 64-page **Necronauts** softcover by Gordon Rennie and Frazer Irving.

Rebellion then plans to release one book a month, beginning in September with **Young Death: Boyhood of a Superfiend** by Wagner and Peter Doherty. This is followed in October by Dan Abnett and Mark Harrison's **Durham Red: The Vermin Stars** with **Judge Dredd/Aliens: Incubus** by Wagner/Andy Diggle and Henry Flint lined up for November and **Banzai Battalion** by Wagner and Flint plus Cam Kennedy and Ian Gibson for December.



***Button Man: The Killing Ground** (£17.99/$27.95), **Hewligan's Haircut** (£10.99/$16.95) and **Necronauts** (£7.99/$13.95) all go on sale on August 28.*

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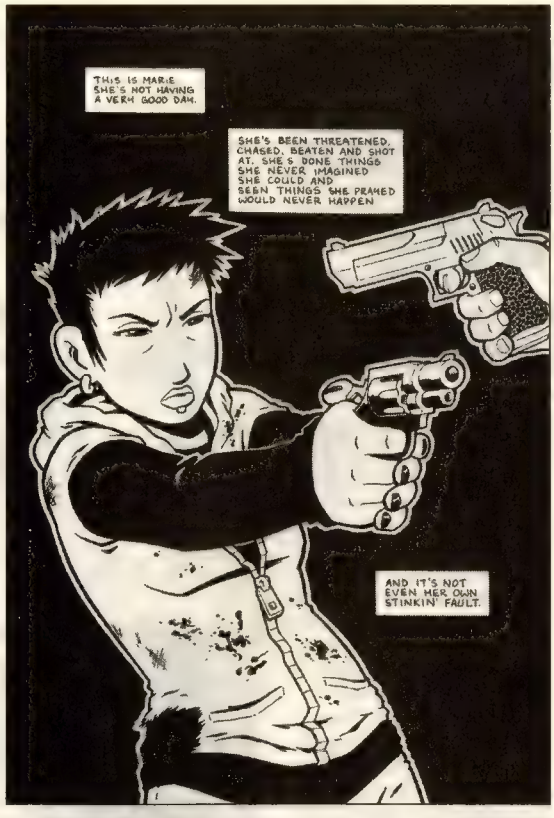
Oni has Bad Day


THIS IS MARIE. SHE'S NOT HAVING A VERY GOOD DAY.
SHE'S BEEN THREATENED, CHASED, BEATEN AND SHOT AT. SHE'S DONE THINGS SHE NEVER IMAGINED SHE COULD AND SEEN THINGS SHE PRAYED WOULD NEVER HAPPEN
AND IT'S NOT EVEN HER OWN STINKIN' FAULT.

MEK artist Steve Rolston is embarking on his first major writing project, a 120-page graphic novel for Oni Press.

Discussing the black and white comic with **CI**, Rolston said it is about a girl on the run for her life and she doesn't even know why. "With **One Bad Day**, I'm trying to create a story similar to what you might find in David Lapham's **Stray Bullets**. A modern crime tale in which the good characters get screwed just as much as the bad guys.

"Everyone knows that life isn't fair," the writer/artist continued. "This story focuses on the truth that bad things can happen to anyone, including nice people who have never done anything wrong."

***One Bad Day**, priced $9.95, ships in August.*

French originate Spawn and Witchblade stories

UNDOUBTEDLY prompted by his Image series being nearly a year behind schedule, Todd McFarlane is authorising his French licensee to originate new **Spawn** stories.

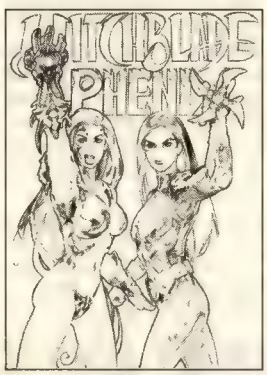
While there has been no suggestion that the Semic-commissioned material will resurface in the US edition, that is a possibility especially given that the French publisher is almost up-to-date with the American series, which has reached #125.

On sale in June, Semic's 64-page **Spawn** #73 features issue #123 of the Image title as well as the first chapter of its *Spawn Simony* two-parter. The serial is written by Alex Nikolavitch and painted by **Alone in the Dark**'s Aleksi Briclot.

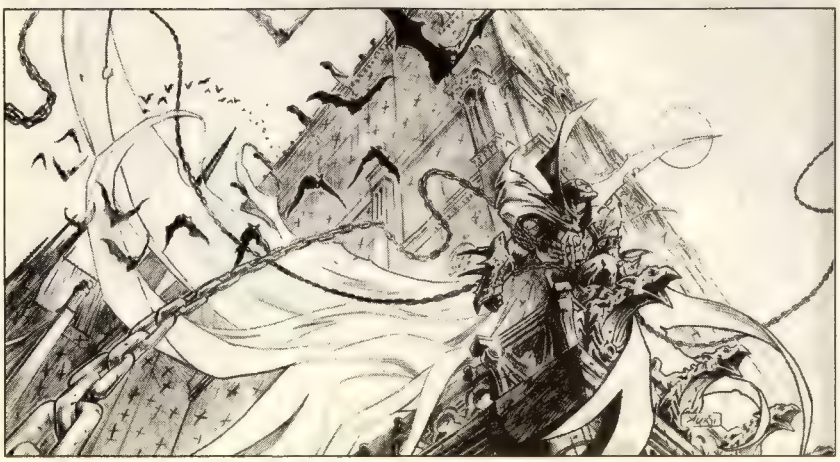
Semic has also done a deal with another Image founder's imprint – Marc Silvestri's Top Cow.

In this case the French publisher is originating a crossover starring two of its own heroines and Top Cow's flagship character.

Currently unscheduled, **WitchBlade/Double Solitaire** features Phenix and Sibilla – a duo Semic compares to DC's **Birds of Prey**. It is being written by Randy and Jean-Marc Lofficier with art by Stephane Roux and Philippe Vandaele.



*Above: Pencilled roughs for Semic's **Witchblade/Double Solitaire** crossover. Below: Aleksi Briclot pencils from the **Spawn** story,* Simony.



Superman in 21st century revamp

LESS than 20 years after DC assigned writer/artist John Byrne the task of remoulding Superman for the 1980s, Mark Waid has been assigned to redefine the Man of Steel for the 21st century.

*Above: Lara and Jor-El prepare to bid farewell to the baby Kal-El in the first issue of **Superman: Birthright**; art by Lenil Yu.*

In collaboration with the one-time **Wolverine** art team of Lenil Francis Yu and Gerry Alanguilan, the **Fantastic Four** writer is chronicling what DC describes as the definitive origin of Superman.

The 12-issue **Superman: Birthright** is, said Waid, absolutely everything he loves about the character all rolled into one series. "And it's Leinil's and my vision on who the Superman of the 21st century is. No Supergirl, no Super-Dog, no Bottled City – just a man trying to do what's right in the world.

"The cross Superman seems to have to bear among fans and readers is that he's perceived as 'too perfect,' as a character we 'can't relate to.' Forgetting for a moment that we're not supposed to identify with Superman, we're supposed to identify with *Clark* – in **Birthright**, Superman is, I think, perhaps more 'human' than he's ever been, because this is his search to define his identity."

● The first issue of **Birthright** is a 40-pager.

***Superman: Birthright** #1, priced $2.95, ships on July 2.*

Bisley's UK return

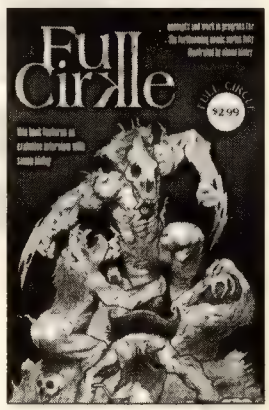
OVER a decade after his last sequential work for a British comic, **2000 AD**'s acclaimed *Sláine* artist Simon Bisley is set to make his UK comeback with a four-part miniseries from a newly-formed Bedfordshire-based company.

Created specifically to publish the illustrator's **Full Cirkle** series, Full Circle Publications is an offshoot of Simon Reed's web-based reedcomics.com.

Co-writer of the miniseries with Harry Markos, Reed created **Full Cirkle** with Bisley. He previewed the title – via a 16-page one-shot – in Bristol at the 2003 Comics Festival.

Due for release later this year, the comic is set in the far future where humanity bands together in clans in order to survive on a now desolate Earth.

Reed, who told **CI** that **Full Cirkle** was about combat and reconciliation in a post-apocalyptic world, then explained "Clans base their dress and fighting styles on different animals, which become the clan's totem.



*Above: The cover to Full Circle's **Full Cirkle: The Preview Book**; art by Simon Bisley.*

"The mix of cultures brought on by following their clan totem introduces different styles of thought," he continued, adding, "There is something unusual about Ashen – daughter of the chief of the Phoenix Clan – which could change the course of events because her past is unknown."

*AN ELSEWORLDS JLA group shot from Alan Davis's **Another Nail**. A sequel to the writer/artist's three-issue **JLA: The Nail**, the prestige format title is lined up for release next year. Another three-parter, it is inked by Davis's frequent collaborator, Mark Farmer, who worked with him on the earlier miniseries.*

Image superheroes start on reality TV

TODD Nauck is planning to bring reality TV to comics in more ways than one.

In a 1988-style move, when fans voted to kill off the Jason Todd version of Robin, not only will Nauck's **Wildguard Casting Call** feature heroes auditioning for a made-for-TV superteam but, in addition, fans will be able to vote for those they think should be members of the group by logging on to wildguard.com.

"**WildGuard** is superheroes meets *American Idol*," Nauck told **CI**. "A made-for-TV superteam where heroes are auditioning to be chosen as one of the five members.

"I first came up with the idea in 1992 while attending the Art Institute," explained Nauck, who said he produced two **Wildguard** mini-comics, which led to his employment at Image Comics in 1994. "I was a fan of the television programme *Cops* and thought it would be interesting if the concept involved cameras following superheroes rather than police officers.

"After my run on **Young Justice**, this just seemed like the next step for me," he said. "And with reality TV as popular as it is right now, I had to give **WildGuard** a shot."

The six-issue series – on which Nauck is joined by his **Young Justice** inker, Lary Stucker – is scheduled to launch through Image on September 10.

More Marvel from Ennis

PREACHER'S Garth Ennis is in a position to give free rein to his ability to write scenes of graphic violence in two minis for Marvel's MAX – adult orientated – imprint.

Both **Born** and **Thor: Vikings** offer a different look at their heroic stars with the former adding to the origin of the Punisher as first revealed in **Marvel Preview** #2.

Rather than the Central Park murder of Frank Castle's family being the catalyst that turned the former Special Forces operative into a mobster-slaying killing machine, Ennis suggests that Castle's transformation began during his tour of duty in Vietnam – as referred to in **The 'Nam** #52-53 and 67-69 [1991-92].

Asked by **CI** if **Born** – a four-parter on which Ennis is joined by **Transmetropolitan** artist Darick Robertson – negated the accepted 1975 origin, assistant editor Nick Lowe was adamant that it did not. "This story sets that one up. It makes you see Frank in a whole new way. Also, I don't really see this as a continuity implant – especially not in a negative way. Frank's history in the Vietnam War is a known aspect of his past. This is one story from the war."

*Above: An interior page from the first issue of Marvel MAX's **Born** four-parter; art by Darick Robertson.*

Lowe added that **Born** takes places after the events chronicled in **The 'Nam** and before the **Marvel Preview** #2 story. "They aren't referenced in the mini and are in no way necessary to it."

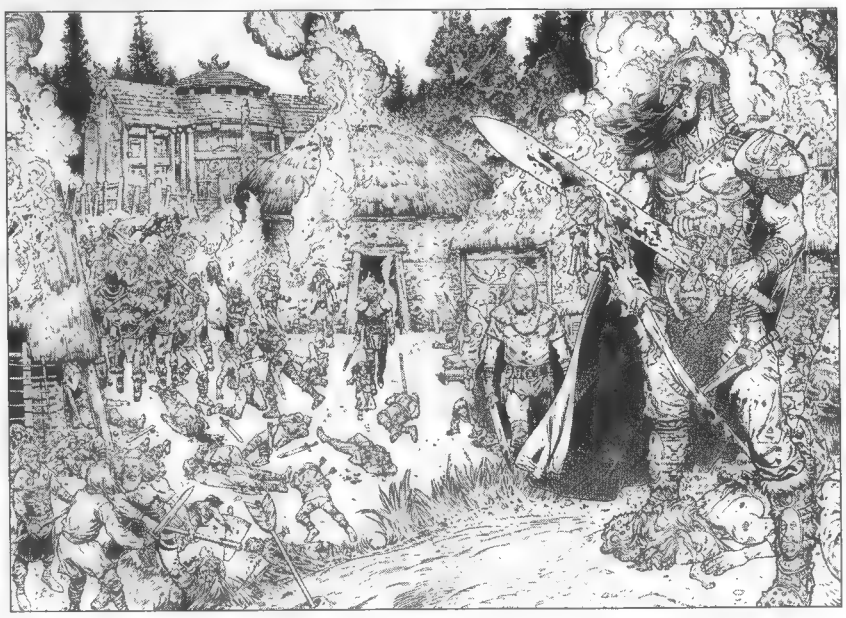
Zombie vikings

Drawn by **Preacher** cover artist Glenn Fabry, the out-of-continuity mini **Thor: Vikings** is a five-parter featuring the Norse god seeking Doctor Strange's aid in preventing the invasion of New York by a horde of long-dead invincible Viking warriors.

Asked about the writer's interpretation of the Norse god, Lowe responded, "Garth has actually taken a pretty traditional take of Thor. This is not Thor with the Odin powers. It's classic Thor with his usually histrionic speech patterns and toughness."

Summing up, Lowe added, "**Born** is a mature adult story that is very serious and haunting, whereas **Vikings** is a zany, crazy book. It is a fun R rated action flick."

***Born** #1 ships on June 25, **Thor: Vikings** #1 on July 30. Each is priced $3.50.*



*Above: A double-page spread for the first issue of Marvel MAX's' **Thor: Vikings**; Glenn Fabry art.*

Trying times for FBI

JUST over a year since Top Shelf was almost forced to the wall by the collapse of LPC, its bookstore distributor, Fantagraphics Books Inc has fallen into similar difficulties, brought on in part by the same reason.

Now in its 27th year, the foremost publisher of alternative comics was unable to pay its bills not only because of unpaid debts in excess of $70,000 left owing by LPC but also, as co-founder Gary Groth explained, because of the Seattle-based company's over-optimistic expectations of the bookstore market. "Inexperience with the book trade resulted in our erring on the side of overprinting our books too heavily throughout 2002, so that our anticipated profit is in fact sitting in our warehouse in the form of books. Loans must be paid in cash, not books. The only way to get out of this hole we've dug ourselves into is to sell those books. "

Like Top Shelf before it, FBI issued an urgent plea to the comics community, asking it help make up the immediate $80,000 shortfall by buying titles direct from FBI. Response was such that, while much ground is still to be made up, the imminent threat to the company's future has been averted.

Indie adapts 1910 Frankenstein movie

Above: Robb Bihun art from Comic Library International's ***Edison's Frankenstein (1910).***

THE FIRST movie based on of Mary Shelley's classic **Frankenstein** novel is being adapted for the little-known Comics Library International.

In collaboration with storyboard artist Robb Bihun, **Bart Simpson Comics** writer Chris Yambar is to bring the 1910 horror film classic, *Edison's Frankenstein* to comics.

Planned for publication in October, the adaptation is a prestige format 64-pager featuring 40 pages of story and 20 pages of historic documentation on the film, its creator, and the original Frankenstein actor, Charles Ogle.

Leading US manga publisher invades UK

THE NUMBER one seller of trade paperbacks to the US book trade is going into partnership with a British book and comics distributor.

In conjunction with Red Route, TokyoPop is setting up a London-based company as a bridgehead into the UK bookshop trade.

Discussing TokyoPop UK, Red Route head Tony Bennett told **CI**, "We already carry most TokyoPop titles and the essence of the new deal is that we will be stockholding their books and pushing them into the book trade. TokyoPop will be producing point of sale stuff such as dump bins and advertising in appropriate media.

"On the general point I think manga has a lot of expansion to come yet in the UK," he added. "I don't know if we will reach the levels of sales that there are in France for example because of their much more successful comic publishing generally. There is such a wealth of different subjects and treatments in Japanese comics that our industry doesn't approach.

"For example," Bennett continued, "I always imagine going into a branch of Waterstone's to find that a third of the books on display are comics – the rough proportion of comicbook sales in Japan – and the range of stuff that would encompass."

Love on the web

ROMANCE author Judith O'Brien is hoping her **Mary Jane** novel – the first from Marvel's *Young Adult* line – will bring a whole new audience into comic shops.

"The whole idea of this project was to address a new market, to get a non-traditional audience involved with these characters," she told **CI**. "And what a fantastic notion. There is a whole largely untapped market out there – females. It's somewhat daunting for a girl to wander into a comicbook store. Really, the testosterone level in those places is so thick, you need a chainsaw to cut it.

"But," she added, "the truth is, these stories and characters are so great, so enduring, that it's a shame most girl's only encounter with them is a nodding acquaintance through big budget movies."

O'Brien said the heavily illustrated 216-page novel focuses not only on the budding romance between Peter Parker and Mary Jane Watson, but also on the events that shape their lives. "While the superhero aspects are secondary to the character development of both MJ and Peter, they are there."

Pictured: A selection of Mike Mayhew interior illustrations for Marvel's first Young Adult *novel, Judith O'Brien's* ***Mary Jane.***

Mary Jane *hardcover, priced $14.99, ships on July 2.*

DC's Philly Shorts

THE SECOND Wizard World East convention is being held in Philadelphia as **CI** is going to press. Unconfirmed reports on a number of DC projects are reaching us as we complete this issue...

FABLES writer Bill Willingham is taking over **Robin** from Jon Lewis.

His first issue is the December-shipping #121 on which he is joined by the series' new penciller **Zatanna: Everyday Magic**'s Rick Mays.

SCHEDULED for September, **Batman: Illustrated by Neal Adams** is a hardcover featuring all of the ground-breaking artist's stories as well as rarely-seen covers.

WITH Rick Leonardi jumping over to draw **Batgirl** as of October's #45, **X-Men 2 Movie Adaptation** penciller Patrick Zircher is moving in to replace him on **Nightwing**, coming on board with #86 following a fill-in issue by Mike Lilley.

THE INHUMANS writer/artist team of Paul Jenkins and Jae Lee are developing a **Batman: Jekyll & Hyde** project for an early 2004 launch.

ETRIGAN is set to find a new host in **Violent Messiah** creator Joshua Dysart's **The Demon: Driven Out**.

Lined up for a September premiere, the six-parter is drawn by Pop (**SpyBoy**) Mhan. It features the demon conjoined with a young girl – a street racer and runner for the Yakuza – he is sexually attracted to after Jason Blood rids himself of Etrigan.

WHY I Hate Saturn's Kyle Baker is writing and drawing a monthly **Plastic Man** series.

THE **100 Bullets** team of Brian Azzarello and Eduardo Risso are the creative crew on a six-issue serial beginning in November in **Batman** #621.

Their stint will be followed by the six-issue return of Jeph Loeb, Jim Lee and Scott Williams, the top-selling creators of the 12-issue *Hush* storyline which concludes in September's #619.

THE LEGION writers Dan Abnett and Andy Lanning are teaming up with artistic newcomer Kalman Andrsofszky for **icandy**. Described as the high-octane action of a cutting-edge video game exploding into the real world, the series premieres in September.

THE FIRST issue of **JLA/AVENGERS** is due to hit the stands in September. The long-awaited DC/Marvel four-parter is written by Kurt Busiek and pencilled by George Perez.

*IT'S ALL girls together when former **Agent X** writer Gail Simone teams up with **Wynnona Earp** artist Joyce Chin for a one-shot in which two of Top Cow's top heroines encounter Harris's archetypal bad girl. **Magdalena/Vampirella/Witchblade** [cover above] is a 24-page Dynamic Forces one-shot, which ships in September.*

Harvey artist dies

PIERCE George Rice died of pneumonia on May 23 at the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Washington. He was 86.

A comicbook illustrator turned classical artist who also wrote art criticism and taught at the National Academy of Design in New York, Rice began his career drawing for Harvey Comics, where he worked on such titles as **Green Hornet** and **Black Cat Comics.**

A recipient of the Bronze Star, after serving with the US Army in Europe during World War II Rice worked for Timely – now Marvel – Comics and began writing critical art essays for what is now the Institute of Classical Architecture and Classical America in New York.

A portrait painter and author of **Man as Hero: The Human Figure in Western Art** [Norton, 1987], he leaves no immediate survivors.

CI #158 competition winners

IN **CI** #158, five readers were offered the opportunity to each win a copy of the new **Animatrix** DVD. The lucky winners were:

Rich Howlett, London SE18
Colin Pulman, Cardiff
Damien Salter, Wolvs
Andrew Vanko, Norwich
Tony Watton, Sheffield
...who have received their prizes.

The grand prize, a page of Dave Gibbons original art, has been won by **Russell Smith** of Lark Rise, Woodfields, Northamptonshire.

Reader votes scored the 10 most popular sections of **CI** #158 as:

1 News International (18.9%)
2 Reviews (14.2%)
3 Matrix feature (12.3%)
4 NetWorks (6.4%)
5 Movers & Shakers (6.2%)
6 Advance Listings (5.7%)
7 Q&A (5.1%)
8 Matrix competition (4.6%)
9 Letters/Comic Cuts (4.2%)
10 Sez Dez (4.1%)

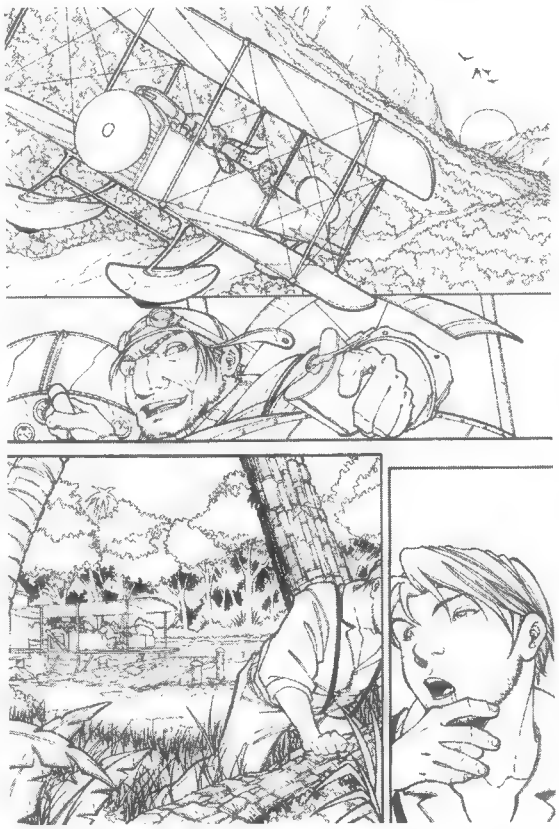
The highest scoring section as the least popular feature was "None, they're all fine" – very encouraging at 23.4%, with Novel Graphics second at 19.1% and Events Guide third at 11.7%. You should get out more!

Jungle Girl swings in

"Tarzan meets Apocalypse Now" as newbie writer seeks to revive 1940s genre popularised by Fiction House's Sheena Queen of the Jungle

WHILE **Liberty Meadows** creator Frank Cho continues to develop his **Shanna the She-Devil** mini for Marvel, a relative newcomer to comics has thrown her own creation into the revived Jungle Queen arena.

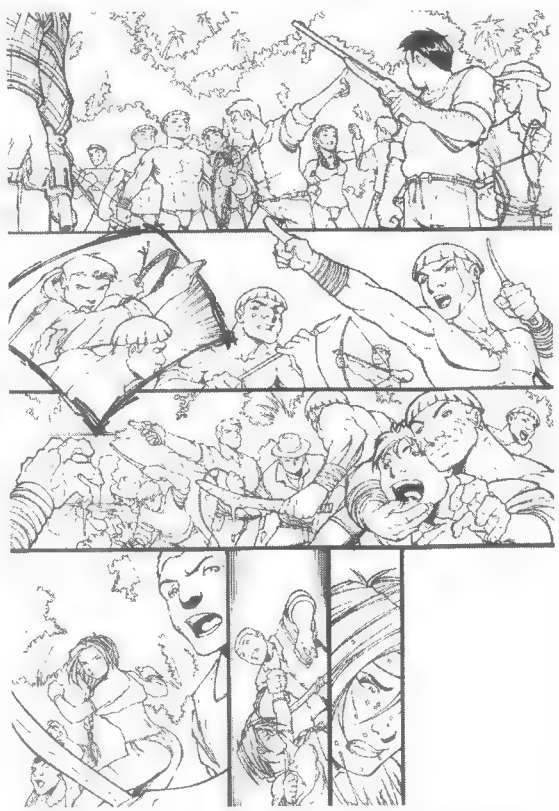
Janet Harvey – whose only previous credits are stories for DC's Batman epic, *No Man's Land* – is writing a four-parter for IDW Publishing she described to **CI** as Tarzan meets *Apocalypse Now*. She says another way of looking at the series – which is drawn by Eduardo Muller, a Brazilian artist born in Germany – is political intrigue meets action adventure in the heart of darkness.



Historical events

Jungle Girl is based on historical events as Harvey explained. "In the early 1900s, the Peruvian Rubber Company basically enslaved and decimated over half of the native Indian population of the Putamayo region.

"In my story," she continued, "the only vocal European proponent of the rights of these Indians – a representative from the British Foreign Office – is 'disappeared' by the rubber companies. However his infant daughter grows up in the care of a local tribe and comes back to haunt them with a vengeance. And when the Foreign Office discovers there is a British girl in the midst of these Indian insurrections, it sets a chain of events in motion."



*Pictured: Interior pages from the first issue of IDW's **Jungle Girl** four-parter; art by Eduardo Muller.*

Driven by rage

Turning to her heroine, Harvey said, "As far as motivations go, she's more Batman than Superman, if that makes sense. She has no special powers, she doesn't turn into a jaguar when she's mad or anything. She's highly skilled – she has an extensive knowledge of the local psychoactive and poisonous plants, she can use a knife, arrows and blow darts tipped with curare poison, and has been hunting animals since puberty.

"She's driven by rage and a keen sense of justice," added Harvey. "She will have an interesting character arc over the course of her story since at the beginning, she is basically semi-feral – she doesn't trust any representative of 'civilisation' and no one is sure if she even speaks anything, let alone English."

***Jungle Girl** #1, priced $3.99, ships in July.*

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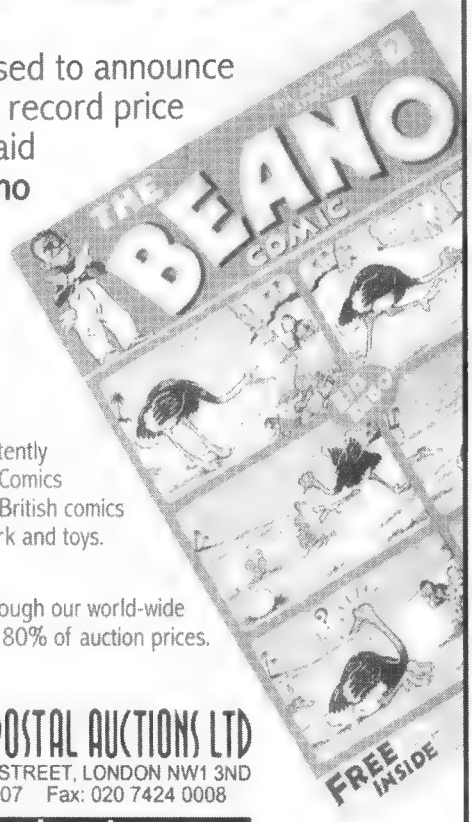

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Charles Burns: Body Horror in Black Ink

Novel Graphics by Paul Gravett

Highlighting the latest and best in graphic novels

HAVE you come across the anonymous strip-format advertisements for Altoids, the peppermints in a retro tin, currently running in comicbooks and magazines? According to these almost masochistic strips, the experience of eating the "curiously strong" mints is likened to having your tongue impaled by a stiletto heel, electrocuted between two wires or scorched by a branding iron.

In another example, a cool female Altoids addict drifts through the night streets, oblivious to the tramps and lechers, as she laments, "People... they have no idea what real pain is."

These high-profile adverts may be many people's first exposure to the perverse imaginings of Charles Burns. He was the perfect choice to add an unmistakeable edginess to this campaign.

Combined with the fact that Burns will be talking about and demonstrating his work on June 30th at the ICA in London *[www.ica.org.uk]*, it seems like a good moment to dig a bit deeper into America's undisputed master of sophisticated creepiness.

There seems to have been one theme that has been obsessing him right from the start: the queasiness at our physical and mental changes triggered by the sexual awakenings of adolescence and more broadly the fears of losing control over our own bodies through accident, disease, surgery or worse. In his two earliest published single pages in **Raw Magazine** 3 (1981), a moment of young romance in *And I Pressed My Hand Against His Face* sparks a kaleidoscope of weird connections: images of biological cross-sections, Japanese monsters and insects breeding.

Wackier but no less unsettling are the ideas behind his other debut page, *Dog Boy*. In this, a loser is given a dog's heart during an illegal transplant operation. When the animal's instincts take over, he can't stop himself licking his girlfriend's face and sniffing other girls' bottoms.

Further Dog Boy capers followed and were adapted with mixed results into a live-action slot for *Liquid TV*, using plastic hairstyles like the old *Max Headroom* shows.

In his subsequent longer stories for **Raw**, Burns reinterpreted the overfamiliar romance and horror genres into surprising, twisted shapes.

These pre-occupations are the products of his childhood immersed in the schlockiest trash culture, from exploitation films on late-night TV to monster mags, bubblegum cards and, of course, old horror, crime and love comics.

"My father was a scientist who once wanted to be a cartoonist, so I was able to read comics without being told they were going to rot my mind. As a result, my mind rotted."

Burns grew up in the sleepy suburb of Bethesda, Maryland. Partly out of these experiences emerged Big Baby, a bald kid with an overactive imagination and a sleepwalking problem. In the 30-page **Curse of the Molemen** (1986), the boy's

fascination with movie monsters becomes blurred with what lurks beneath the veneer of respectability: his parents' lies to him and a neighbour's domestic violence towards his wife.

As Burns explained, "He's a kid who's trying to make sense of this unfathomable reality, the horror of real life." It's a chilling, underplayed piece that sticks in the mind.

In sublime contrast, Burns' passion for the photo-comics and movies starring Mexican super-wrestlers like El Santo in their crazy masks inspired another of his recurring characters. El Borbah is an overweight wrestling detective, a "pissed-off, money-grubbing, beer-drinking guy with no moral scruples". Using his brawn more than his brain, he barged through a string of bizarre **Hard-Boiled Defective Stories**.

Burns had been at college with Matt Groening. Before *The Simpsons*, Groening made his name syndicating his own weekly strip **Life in Hell** and Burns followed his example. He serialised his expanded remixes of Dog Boy and the **Raw** story *A Marriage Made in Hell* and came up with **Burn Again**, a new, 46-page parody of sinister cults and Jack Chick's evangelical comic-strip tracts.

Now in demand from bands and magazines as an illustrator, Burns also branched out by designing the concepts for *The Hard Nut*, an innovative version of *The Nutcracker* ballet produced by Mark Morris.

In 1995 however, the siren call of comics lured Burns back to the drawing board to develop his body horror fixation into **Black Hole**. Raging hormones and a contagious plague are mutating a group of high-school students: Keith sheds his skin like a snake; Rob has a second mouth under his throat; Chris has grown a tail. How do you catch it? How long can you keep it secret? How will it affect your first experiences of sex, drugs and maybe love? How long do you have left to live?

Spanning twelve 32-page issues, Burns is taking his time here to unravel the anxieties and alienation of being a teenager. He does much of this through a trance-like slowness, acutely observed internal monologues, and by revealing encounters from more than one viewpoint. An escalating sadness and dread pervade every page of what promises to be his masterpiece.

Ten issues of **Black Hole** are available to date from Fantagraphics, who have also repackaged most of his earlier work in hardbacks.

Throughout, his drawing is precision itself. Shadows and textures on bodies, hair, clothes, and vegetation, shimmer with his zigzag brush strokes, as jagged and surgical as a chainsaw.

There's no room for grey in Burns' comics. His is a black and white world, much more black than white, saturated with the darkness of the soul.

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Opposite page: A frame from Charles Burns' latest series, ***Black Hole****. Above:* Dog Boy, *from* ***Raw Magazine****, gets friendly.*

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Australian producers hire indie writer/artist for Luther Arkwright movie

Mike Conroy's Frame to Frame

Charting the latest news between films and comics

WHEN one of the most intricate British comics series is optioned for the screen, one can't help but wonder whether audiences are ready for the parallel world complexities of **The Adventures of Luther Arkwright**. But the undoubted success of *The Matrix* and its sequel might not only prove that they are, but also explain why KouKou Productions chose now as a good time to acquire the film rights to Bryan Talbot's multi award-winning title.

Whatever motivated them, you have to admire the balls of the husband-and-wife team of Kevin and Sophie Patrick for being willing to tackle *Arkwright* at all, let alone as their Melbourne-based production company's maiden project.

But they seem undaunted by the prospect of taking on a story that involves different realities as well as religion, politics and romance.

"**The Adventures of Luther Arkwright** is a stunning, quasi-futuristic graphic novel that deserves the big screen treatment," Sophie remarked. "It's an intricate adventure story that spans multiple universes, combing the best elements of science fiction, action movies and historical drama."

Most of the story takes place on one of the many alternate parallels. It involves psychically gifted agents Luther Arkwright and Rose Wylde, who are sent to investigate a cosmic conspiracy that threatens to destroy the very fabric of the multiverse.

"Luther and Rose are not your typical action heroes – and *Luther Arkwright* isn't going to be your typical 'buddy' action movie," Sophie explained. "They are complex and fascinating characters, with unique abilities, but who aren't afraid of using deadly force when the fate of the multiverse is at stake."

In a brave move, the Patricks – who publish the current adventures of the Panther, an Aussie superhero who first appeared in 1957 – have commissioned another movie newcomer to write the script for the feature, which they are intending to put into production next year.

Also based in Melbourne, Bruce Mutard is a writer/artist who has been self-publishing on the Australian comics scene since 1994. His most high profile project to date is **The Bunker**, a graphic novel that should have shipped from Image in April.

Here's hoping the newcomers don't find themselves out of their depth on what could prove to be a mammoth undertaking.

A movie based on Talbot's **The Tale of One Bad Rat** is already languishing in development limbo at Tom Lyle's Fat Dragon Productions. It would be unfortunate to say the least were the Sunderland-based creator's second experience with a fledging production company to have the same outcome.

Nurse Buffy

Sometimes you just have to wonder where they dig it up from...

According to at least one UK tabloid, Sarah Michelle Gellar is actively seeking the lead role in the film based on Marvel's **Night Nurse** now that she's the former Buffy the Vampire Slayer.

Ve-e-r-ry interesting – but stupid, as Arte Johnson's all-but-forgotten Nazi soldier would say.

Not only has no one optioned **Night Nurse** but there's no comic to base a movie on. Okay, there is the unbelievably bad but thankfully short-lived 1972 series but it's hardly in the "gotta make a comicbook movie outta this" category.

Who'd trust a journalist? Oops!

Spinal Tap

Mark Hamill's mockumentary, *Comic Book: The Movie* – which was to get a limited release from Creative Light Entertainment – is to reach a wider audience after being picked up by Miramax as the first in a "first look production and distribution deal".

"I hope it'll be the *Spinal Tap* for comicbook nerds," said Hamill, the actor who played Luke Skywalker in the original *Star Wars* trilogy. "I speak not only as a nerd myself, but one of the organisational leaders,

"SPIDER-Man. Spider-Man. Does whatever a spider can." That theme tune is coming back. Although it's yet to announce air dates, Channel 4 has picked up all 52 episodes of the recently digitally remastered 1967 Classic Spider-Man *animated series. Unfortunately, judging by the promo art (above) someone somewhere didn't take the time to note the correct spelling of the Marvel hero's name. But it probably wasn't* Fritz the Cat *director Ralph Bakshi who led the animation crew for episodes 21 to 52.*

hopefully."

The feature – which purports to be a documentary about two typical Golden Age comicbook characters who never actually existed – is completely improvised. Directed by and starring Hamill as Don Swan, comic book historian and comic shop owner turned film maker, it was shot at last year's Comicon International in San Diego.

And finally...

Because I don't get any colour, check out the picture at the bottom of page 3 for a first look at Ron Perlman as Mike Mignola's Hellboy.

KICKING the movie towards the big league, Pulp Fiction *star John Travolta has joined the cast of Artisan's* Punisher. *The star of everything from* Grease *and* Saturday Night Fever *to* Pulp Fiction *and* Battlefield Earth *is to play Howard Saint. Seemingly an upstanding citizen but in reality heavily involved in the underworld, Saint clashes with the Marvel antihero played by Thomas (*Dreamcatcher*) Jane when his son is brutally killed.*

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Comment

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Comment is a forum to enable fans and professionals alike to express their personal points of view on aspects of the comics industry. As such, the following opinions do not necessarily reflect those of this publication, but space will be given in subsequent issues to well-reasoned opposing views. Submissions are edited only for grammar, clarity and brevity.

The state of comics (yawn...)

Comment by Pete Doree via e-mail: petedoreen@aol.com

I'VE been out of the industry for a while (in fact many moons ago, **CI** ran a favourable review to my small press comic **The Infernal Gods**) but now I'm back. Please forgive me if any of this has been done to death, but it seems to me that unless something drastic is done NOW, the comics industry has about 30 years left before it goes the way of the Pulps.

As I say, I've only recently got back into buying comics again, but I remember the rot setting in as far back as **Batman: Year One**. The fact is that this industry, after the wholesale rising of speciality shops, went hell for leather to appeal to the old fans. The people, like you, me, and most readers of **CI**, who'd been around a while, who could pick up a 'revamp' of an old character and not need anything explained to us.

All well and good, but it seems to have gone too far. I've just read **Daredevil: Yellow**. Nice art, but why? It doesn't do anything more than **Secret Origins of Super Heroes** did all those years ago. Books like this (and let's face it, most are like this now) don't do anything more than fill old fans with a warm glow of nostalgia. They fail to address the most important question of all: where will the *new* fans come from?

When we were all kids, we could get pretty much any Marvel or DC comic we wanted, because they were all on sale at our local newsagents. We've all got that story about our mum buying us **Mighty World of Marvel** (or whatever) to keep us quiet, but our kids aren't going to experience that. My nephew loves Gil Kane's **Sword of the Atom** (remember that?) because I gave him my copies, but he doesn't see comics as something he should get into compared with computer games and DVDs, because you can't buy comics any more.

The industry is chasing all us old timers so hard it's forgotten to take care to get some new fans. I understand Marvel and DC don't even run letters pages any more. What further proof do you need?

At least Stan Lee (for all his perceived faults) kept going after new readers, as, in fact, did Dez Skinn. I wouldn't have bought **Hulk Weekly** if it hadn't have been for David Lloyd and Steve Parkhouse, as, I'm sure, would many. And if **Warrior** had been all reprints, who would've bought it?

You only have to look at the current run of movies to see the head in the sand mentality currently prevalent. We have *Blade*, *Spidey*, *X-Men*, *Daredevil* and *The Hulk*, but are any of their comics in the local paper shop?

Surely it's occurred to somebody that there's money and new readers to be made here? What a way to run a business!

Imagine if Sainsbury's operated like this.

A weekend well spent

Comment by David Hoffman, Aged ~~13½~~ 31½. Via e-mail

I FIND it very hard to explain to non-comics fans precisely what the attraction of a comics convention is.

First of all you have to explain that you do read and enjoy comics; that they are not all for kids; that some of them are quite grown up really and are called graphic novels; and that it's a serious art form worthy of a weekend's studious attention. Then you have to add that, actually, going to a decent comic convention is a bit of a laff and involves really quite a lot of alcohol.

And only a few people dress up funny (mentioning no Lobos or Lenore-the-cute-dead-girls).

This analysis can be substantiated by this year's rather entertaining Bristol experience. Thus the National Comics Awards. On the one hand, an opportunity for the leaders in the field to be shown the peer and fan recognition which is due to them. On the other, the award was an emblazoned Bart Simpson bubble bath. You get the idea.

The panels, of course, tended away from the drunken side of things. Ranging from Jeff Smith and Paul Grist, to DC/Vertigo (the largest American presence) via Jim Lee and Bryan Talbot, as well as

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the smaller panels, there was the opportunity to discuss a range of material in a thoughtful and intelligent manner.

Then there was the Charity Auction, which tended more towards the alcoholic end of things – well, there must have been some reason why Dez Skinn was propositioned by a section of the audience to shave off his moustache for charity…

At this point I have a confession to make. I sold some comics this year. I know that there will be gasps of shock – in my defence, it was only a small box full, and I did spend the proceeds by the end of the afternoon on, you've guessed it, other comics.

Well, there was just too much to choose from. Dealers with back issues, publishers, statues of D.R. and Quinch no less, and a whole range of small press stuff (I would like to mention, because I liked them, **Miranda** (Comeuppance Comics), **Raven** (Ariel Press), **The O Men**, and Chris Staros's way-too-tempting Top Shelf titles). Actually, it was a good thing I had the empty box with me, really.

Mind you, the Sunday morning small press experience is a bit more subdued. Saturday, everyone is full of enthusiasm, you get the full artistic manifesto. Sunday morning, it's more like: 'This my comic, you buy?'

I wonder why everyone's feeling a bit delicate? As that well-known ancient Roman comics fan Cicero said, 'O Tempora! O Mores!", which roughly translated means, is it too late for another?

And then all too soon, it's over, time to buzz off home, poorer, entertained, mildly starstruck, slightly hungover, fan juices revived for another year. Thanks Kev, see you next year.

Good times, bad times...

Comment by Peter Sidebotham, Congleton, Cheshire

IS IT just me or is Rebellion currently publishing some really poor work – notably *Cabalistics Inc?* I've seen better artwork in the fan press. *Snow Tiger*, however, is what I've come to expect from **2000 AD**; good art and unpredictable scripts – a classic in the making.

And I don't much like the new-look **Megazine**, so that's off the buying list at the moment.

Warhammer Monthly has some great artists working on it, with strong characters appearing, including Darkblade, Stern, Grim, Jeriko and Dwarf Lords.

But I do like the *Ultimates* titles (Spidey and X-Men) – loved the scene where Cyclops blew Quicksilver off the bonnet of his car. So it's not all bad!

Stranger in a strange land

Comment by Julian Dass, Barnsley, South Yorkshire

I'VE just read Mark Millar's article in the **Times** about **Superman: Red Son** and thought, "What?!?". Corrupting something intrinsic to right wing America's way of life? Tony Benn puffing his pipe at Number 10? JFK watches impotently (as if)? Could there be something like a war in England where US-sponsored capitalists sweep down from Manchester to impose revolutionary capitalism on Soviet-backed cockneys? Sounds a great laugh!

For what it's worth, the only other thought I had was that the article perhaps slightly understated the relevance of the historical circumstances in which Supes was created. Mark mentioned that it's been said the best sci-fi is really contemporary commentary – couldn't agree more – and that perhaps Siegel and Shuster were doing something like that in 1938.

For the previous decade or so before 1938, German/European Jewish families had been sending children to live with relatives, mainly in Britain and the US – although a bill to accept 20,000 Jewish children was turned down in the US Congress shortly before war broke out. Nazi laws prevented Jewish people leaving Germany with money, so many parents sent their kids but stayed themselves, just to try to protect their property. (A lot of the wealthier people deposited valuables in Swiss bank accounts. But after the war when surviving relatives, often the children, tried to claim their family money, the banks would not release it because nobody could prove that the depositors were dead; so the Swiss bankers kept it! Who says banking is amoral?)

It's probably reasonable to assume all that would have had a huge impact on any young Jewish boy in the 1930s and what with that constant crap about the Nazi Aryan superman, Jerry and Joe likely as not responded with a Superman of their own, whose reason for being was to defend their new home. Rather than being inspired directly by American values, the original Superman could possibly be seen as an asylum seeker's guardian (controversial?) which was almost totally obscured by his national assimilation.

I've often wondered about Lex Luthor as well; Lex = word (of) Luthor. Close enough to Martin Luther, the Protestant fundamentalist and anti-Semite?

Nah, I'm stretching with that. But maybe Supes RS could have Lex (Adam) Smith as his arch foe?

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Prologue

It's Marvel movie season here at FPI!

Daredevil, with his acrobatic skills and super keen senses, has come and gone, and despite my Ben Affleck reservations, the Film was still a huge, commercial and public, success and certainally boosted the sales of his comics here at the warehouse!

X2 eXploded onto our screens and quickly became one of my favorite comic translations. Roll on X-Men 3 (already scheduled for release May 5th 2006), and as you read this, The Hulk should be starting to break weekend box office records!

Due to the popularity of these and other comic book films, more and more characters are being selected for movie stardom, e.g. The Punisher, Fantastic Four and Ghost Rider. Here at FPI we feel it our duty to help you familiarise yourselves with these and many other titles, and in this endeavour we have once again upped the size of our catalogue *but not the price of our comics!* So take a look through, hunt down those missing issues and maybe find some new ones along the way!

Gary,
and the FPI crew !

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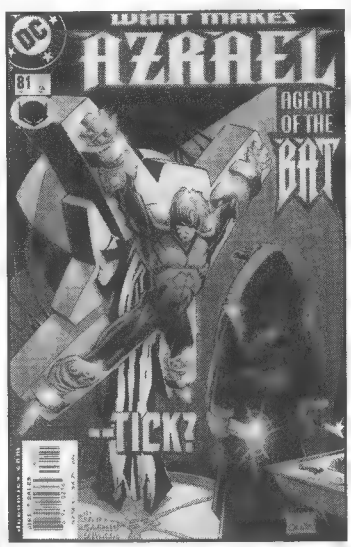

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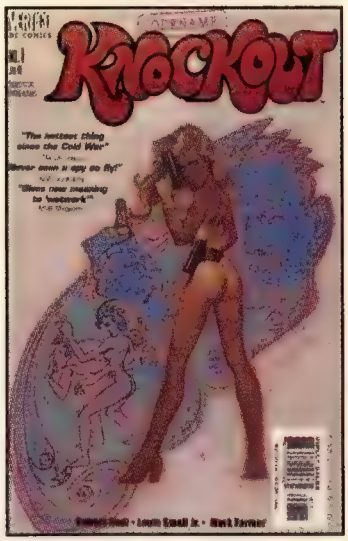

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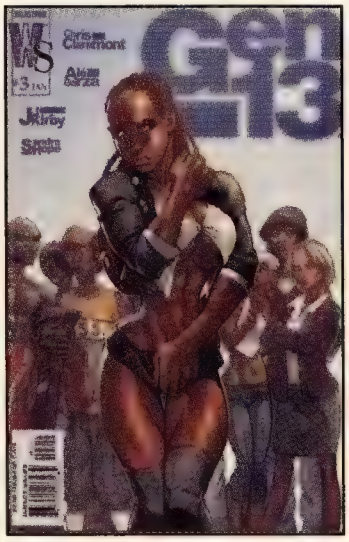

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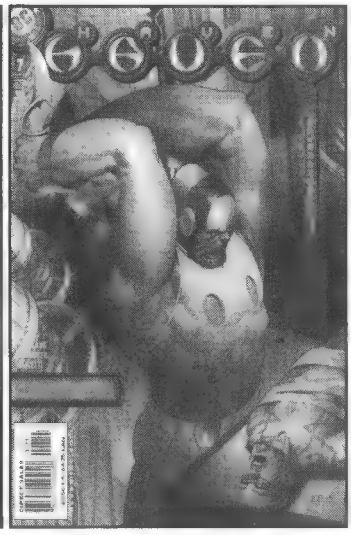

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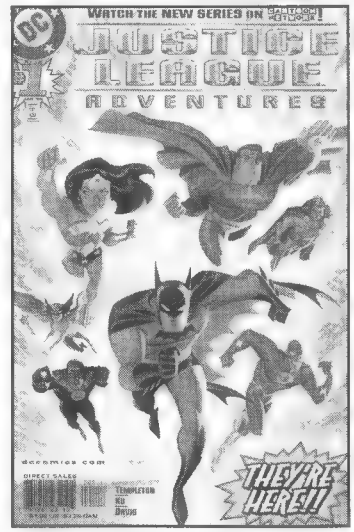

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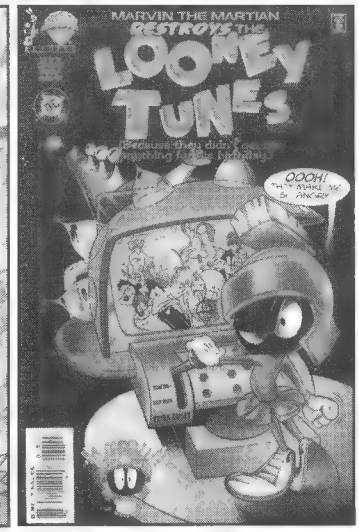

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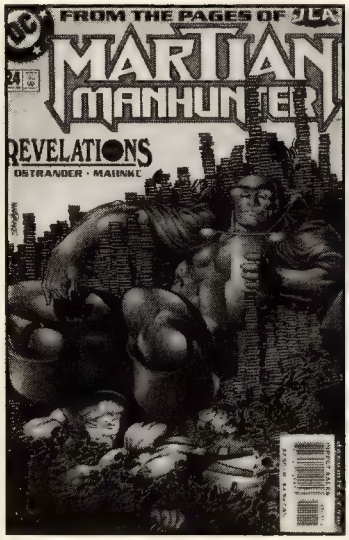

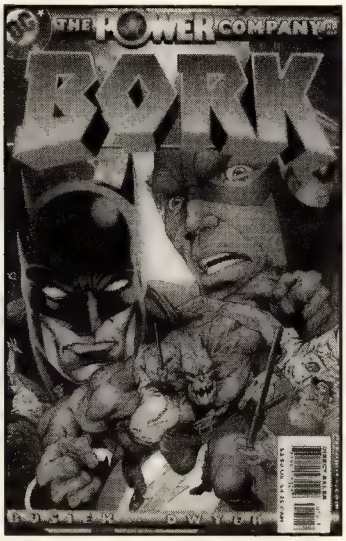

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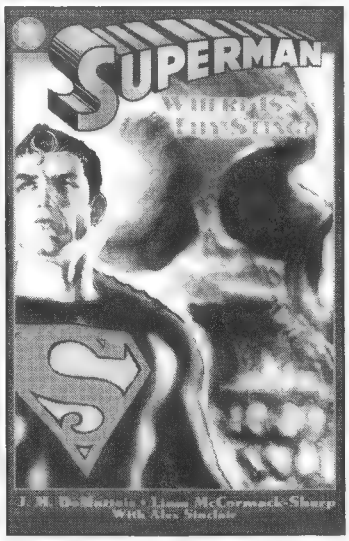

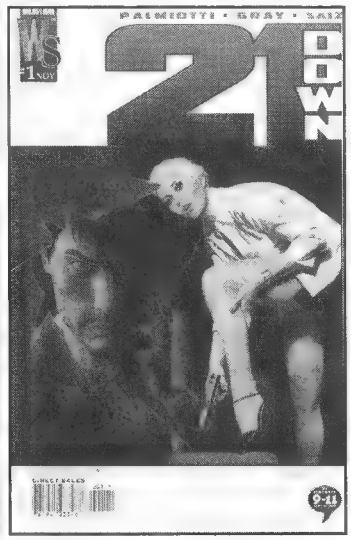

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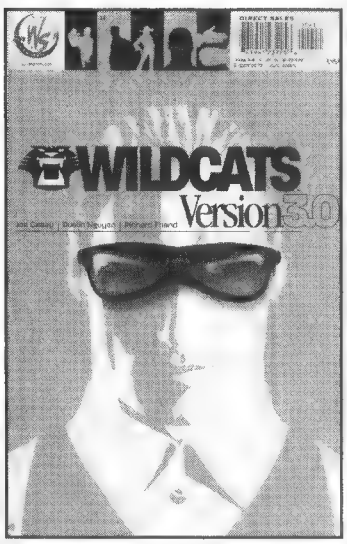

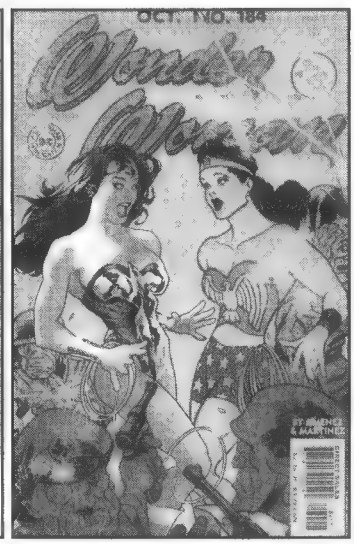

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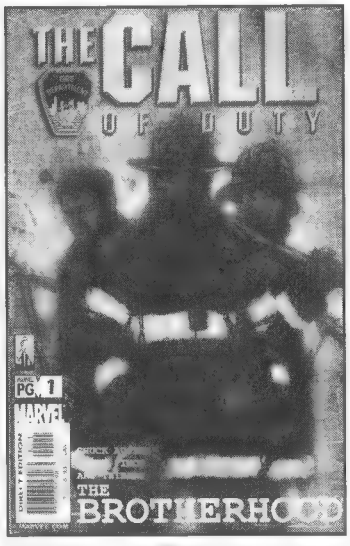

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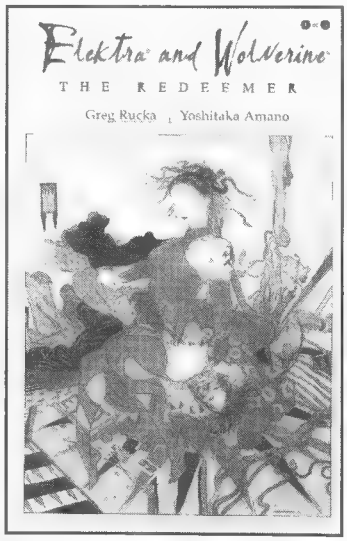

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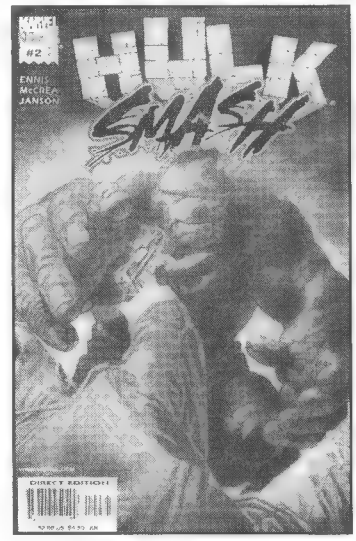

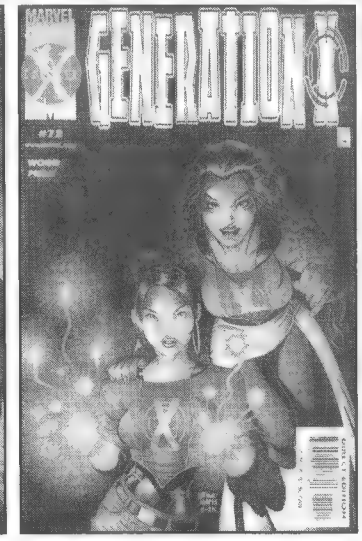

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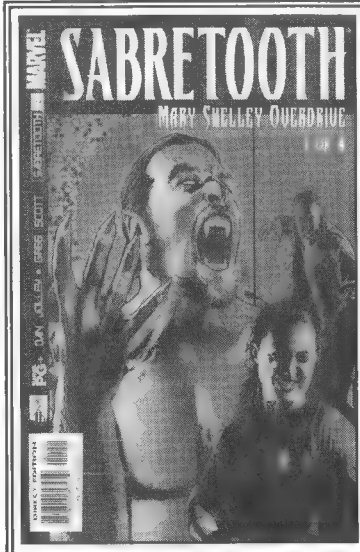

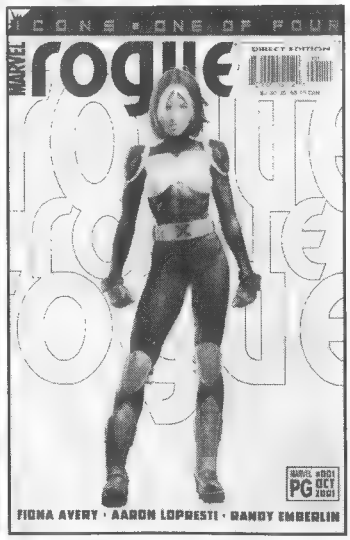

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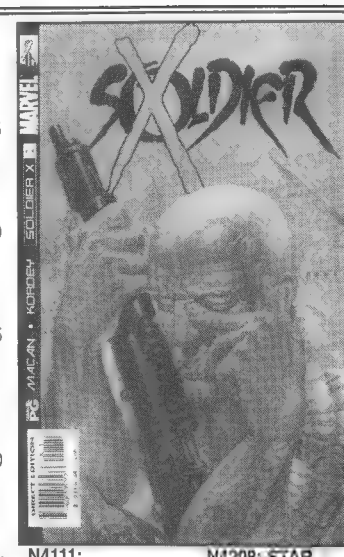

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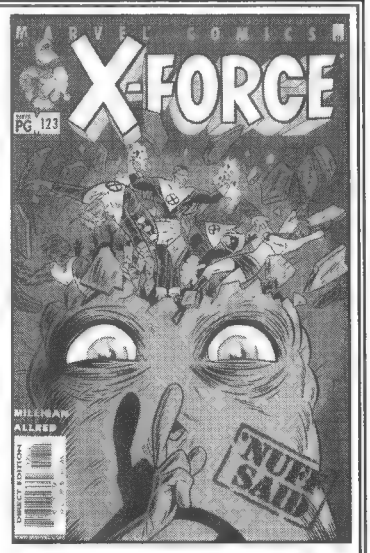

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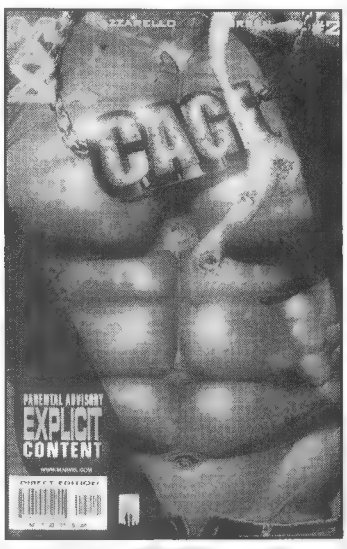

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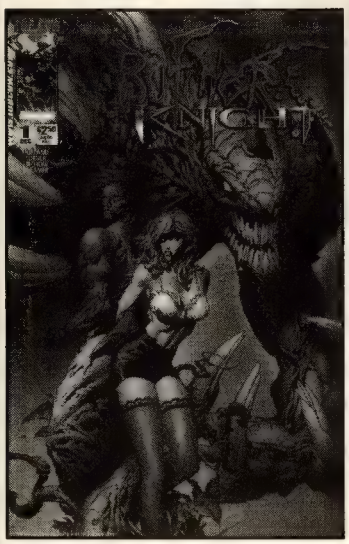

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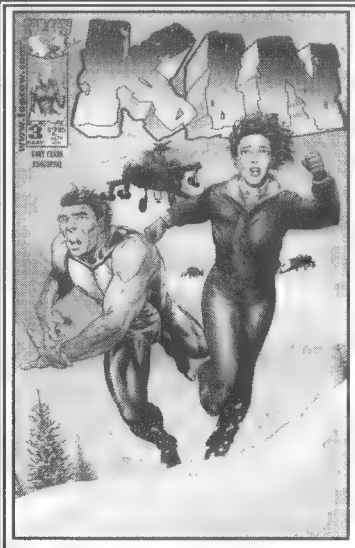

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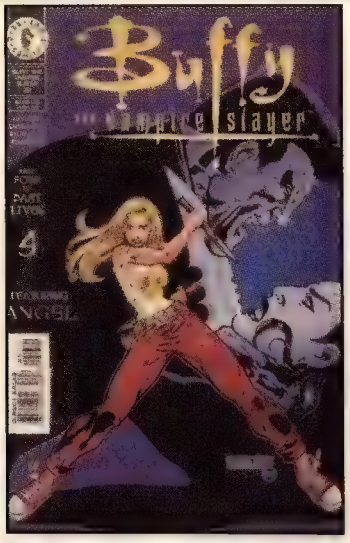

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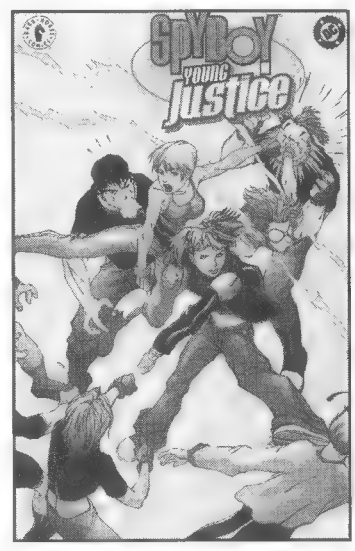

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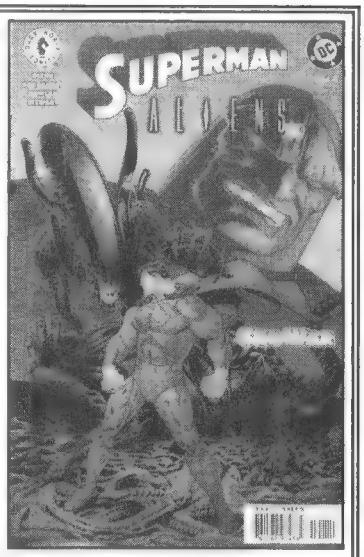

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AD2000G:
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AD2000H:
1130, 1134, 1146, 1154, 1156, 1183, 1185, 1190, 1192, 1193, 1196, 1198, 1204, 1209, 1210, 1211, 1223, 1224 .....£0.50

Epilogue

Firstly, we'd like to thank all of you for the huge response to our last catalogue, and assure you that if people like yourselves are out there, we will continue to produce these catalogues! Never forget that without you we are nothing and that any ideas and comments from yourselves are welcomed, so that we can continue to improve on what we believe to be a great back issue catalogue.

In the past we have experienced some problems with the speed of our deliveries, but we are now confident that this has been corrected and that your orders will be delivered well within 22 days.

Please remember that stock quantities still vary widely, and a list of alternative titles can help us to spread the picking net further.

So write, e-mail, fax or phone your orders into us. We are here to help you.

NB Wildstorm, Cliffhanger and Homage titles will be found in both the Image and DC Sections.

Advance Listings

READERS: You can use this Advance Listings *section as an order form with your direct market store or mail order supplier. Simply mark the items you require, copy or remove these pages (or list them on a separate piece of paper) and give it to your supplier, together with a note of your name, address and phone number to guarantee not missing any of the new titles being published. Certain suppliers may not accept standing orders, so check with them first. All prices of US titles listed are in dollars. Import prices are usually converted at a rate of $1.00 = 85p UK sterling. Shipping dates given are the earliest date product will reach stores. All dates, prices and information are assumed to be accurate as provided by publishers.*

Compiled by Jim Hannah

The following are 32 page colour titles unless stated

ON SALE FROM
AUG 6

Dark Horse

Ghost in the Shell II: Man-Machine Interface 7 (Masamune Shirow) After arriving at the ocean-floating Poseidon Industrial Headquarters, supercyber-agent Motoko Aramaki is determined to infiltrate into the Decatoncale supercomputer, one of only three such systems on earth. $3.50

Go Boy 7: Human Action Machine 2 (Tom Peyer & Jon Sommariva + Kris Justice) Can Jonny defeat the Cultist, save the Go Base, and come to grips with his new superpowered life all at the same time? $2.99

Oh My Goddess! 100 *(Dr Moreau* 1 of 5; Kosuke Fujishima) Keichi and Belldandy have a delivery to make to a professor at the university. But he's no ordinary professor. Actually, he's more of the mad doctor type, and he's obsessed with robotics. b&w $2.99

Star Wars: Empire 12 *(Darklighter* 3 of 4; Paul Chadwick & Doug Wheatley + Chris Chuckry) After the mutiny on board the Rand Ecliptic, Biggs Darklighter and his companions are able to make contact with the Rebel Alliance. A plan is hatched to liberate several squadrons of X-wings, but until the Rebels get their hands on the new fighters, their only hope is pluck, luck, and the skill of pilots like Biggs Darklighter. $2.99

DC Comics

21 Down #12 (Jimmy Palmiotti + Justin Gray & Jesús Saiz + Palmiotti; *WildStorm)* Alex confronts a being claiming to be Herod, Mickey and Preston's lives are drastically transformed, and all of 21 Down undergoes a dramatic change. .. $2.95

Action Comics 806 (Joe Kelly & Pascual Ferry + Cam Smith) Superman is attacked by an unknown assailant and left for dead, and it's up to Girl 13 to protect him. $2.25

Arkham Asylum: Living Hell 4 (Dan Slott & Ryan Sook + Wade von Grawbadger) Dr Arkham and his band of guards are left to face a horde of a thousand maniacs... including a ticked-off Killer Croc with a score to settle. $2.50

one-shot **The Authority** 0 (Robbie Morrison & Dwayne Turner + Sandra Hope; *WildStorm)* This volume reprints the *High Stakes* story, serialised in three Eye of the Storm titles. Find out how our heroes react when a murderous bet is made at the expense of the planet Earth. 40pg $2.95

The Authority 4 (Robbie Morrison & Dwayne Turner + Sal Regla; *WildStorm)* Following the brutal assault on the Carrier that left the team in shambles and Swift captured, The Authority has declared war on Reality Incorporated. $2.95

new **Bad Girls** 1 (Steve Vance & Jennifer Graves) Lauren is the new girl in the mall-and-beach town of San Narciso, California, and though this is her third high school in two years, she's determined to call this one home. $2.50

one-shot **Batman: The Cult** (Jim Starlin & Bernie Wrightson) Deacon Blackfire, a charismatic shaman with roots as old as Gotham City itself, has amassed the city's homeless into an army, one he seemingly uses to fight crime. But Blackfire has a hidden agenda... 208pg $19.95

Batman/Aliens II (Ian Edginton & Staz Johnson + James Hodgkins) Collecting the miniseries. A construction crew uncovers a sealed laboratory where the last survivor of an Antarctic expedition sought to seal away the evil he carried back to Gotham City. 160pg $14.95

Batman: Nevermore 5 (Len Wein & Guy Davis; *Elseworlds)* Edgar Allan Poe has faced his own inner demons as well as the mysterious Raven Murderer. Now his investigation is at an end, and not even the Batman's intervention and detective skills will be enough to prepare Poe for the truth that lies behind the murders of Baltimore's elite. $2.50

Detective Comics 785 *(Made of Wood* 2; Ed Brubaker + Rick Spears & Patrick Zircher + Aaron Sowd) Batman and Sentinel team up to solve a decades-old mystery. Can they find a serial killer before he carves up the innocents of modern-day Gotham? 40pg $2.75

Extinction Event 2 (Robert Weinberg & Brett Booth + Sal Regla; *WildStorm)* As the research team works to uncover the secrets of an ancient, advanced dinosaur civilisation, it stumbles across an even greater discovery: thousands of the prehistoric beasts in cryogenic sleep! $2.50

Formerly Known as the Justice League 2 (Keith Giffen + J.M. DeMatteis & Kevin Maguire + Joe Rubinstein) It's déja vu all over again as Maxwell Lord and the former heroes of the Justice League set up shop in a strip mall. Unfortunately, they're up against the one foe they hadn't counted on. $2.50

Harley Quinn 35 (A.J. Lieberman & Mike Huddleston + Troy Nixey) Harley Quinn has $500,000 riding on delivering a child to a certain location on time... only the kid's being hunted by every mob family in Gotham. $2.50

Hawkman 18 (Geoff Johns & José Luis Gárcia-López) Carter Hall journeys to Germany to pay tribute to a man who was very important to him over 200 years ago. $2.50

one-shot **Human Target: Final Cut** (Peter Milligan & Javier Pulido; *Vertigo)* Softcover version of the original hardcover graphic novel. Christopher Chance is hired to impersonate an aging film actor marked for death by an extortionist who preys upon the Hollywood glitteratti. 96pg $19.95

JSA: All-Stars 4 (various) Stargirl enlists the aid of her partner and stepfather, S.T.R.I.P.E., as she heads out on a hunt for the one person she'd rather forget: her biological father. $2.50

Justice League Adventures 22 (Stuart Moore & John Delaney + Robin Riggs) The first time Green Lantern fought the alien race called the Shayol, they killed three of his fellow GL Corps members. Now they've arrived on Earth, and GL must decide how to deal with them – before Hawkgirl takes matters into her own hands. $2.25

Lobo Unbound 3 (Keith Giffen & Alex Horley + Mike DeCarlo) Lobo has to find a way to regain his dignity and his reputation from Bling-Bling the Hip-Hop Ho'. Of course, all Bling-Bling wants for Christmas is Lobo's head on a platter. $2.95

Looney Tunes 105 (various) Pépé Le Pew goes courting, the Three Bears get Daffy Duck as a house guest, and Bugs Bunny takes Elmer Fudd on a museum tour. $2.25

new **The Maxx Book One** (Sam Kieth & William Messner-Loebs & Kieth; *WildStorm)* Beginning a series of collected editions. Book One, collecting the first six issues, introduces the surreal universe of The Maxx, a homeless superhero who lives in a cardboard box on the street, and his social worker/soulmate, Julie. 144pg . $17.95

Robotech: Love and War 3 (various; *WildStorm)* Max and Miriya finally meet... but on the battlefield. Their first encounter is on opposing sides of the war, and Max will have to fly his toughest mission to survive this encounter. Variant cover. $2.95

one-shot **Scooby-Doo Dollar Comic** (Terrance Griep + Chris Duffy & Ned Sonntag + Ivan Brunetti) Reprints the stories from 1997's Scooby-Doo #1 for a buck. $1.00

The Spirit Archives Vol 11 (Will Eisner; hbk) Reprinting Spirit sections from July 1, 1945 to December 30, 1945. 216pg $49.95

Superman: Birthright 2 (Mark Waid & Leinil Yu + Gerry Alanguilan) The Man of Steel-to-be becomes embroiled in a political conflict in South Africa and must decide the best way to settle things. 40pg $2.95

Vertigo Pop!: Bangkok 4 (of 4; Jonathan Vankin & Giuseppe Camuncoli + Shawn Martinbrough; *Vertigo)* Tuze puts her plan in motion to save Taeng from a life of exploitation. But in Bangkok, even the best intentions can lead to shocking results. $2.95

Marvel

Alias 25 *(Purple* 2 of 6; Brian Michael Bendis & Michael Gaydos; *MAX Comics)* Secrets of a dark chapter in Marvel Comics history are revealed in the story that changes Jessica's life forever. $2.99

Elektra 26 (Robert Rodi & Sean Chen; *Marvel Knights)* Witness how Elektra tries to assassinate a ruthless African dictator. $2.99

The Eternal 3 *(A Gift From The Gods* 3 of 6; Chuck Austen & Kev Walker; *MAX Comics)* What happens when you defy the Gods? The civil war begins as Eternal battles Eternal for the fate of the planet. $2.99

one-shot **Marvel Masterworks: Doctor Strange** Vol 1 (various; hbk) Doctor Strange is mankind's only hope against the dark otherworldly forces that conspire to steal the life of the conscious world. Collects Strange Tales #110-111 and #114-141. 272pg $49.99

Sentinel 5 *(Salvage* 5 of 6; Sean McKeever & UDON) Juston's problems continue to grow worse, but his new friend has a whole handful of solutions, and really big hands. $2.50

Spider-Girl 63 *(Marked For Death* 3 of 6; Tom DeFalco & Ron Frenz) Kaine returns – but will he help or terminally hinder Spider-Girl? $2.99

new **Supreme Power** 1 (J. Michael Straczynski & Gary Frank; *MAX Comics)* Presenting a brand-new vision of a world about to give birth to its first generation of superheroes. From their birth it follows them through adulthood, and examines how their lives and abilities change and shape the world around them. ... $2.99

Thor 67 (Dan Jurgens & Ben Lai and Ray Lai) *Spiral* concludes, as the Invasion of Asgard begins. $2.99

Trouble 2 (Mark Millar & Terry Dodson + Rachel Dodson) Four teenagers learn their summer of carefree romance partying comes with life-changing consequences. $2.99

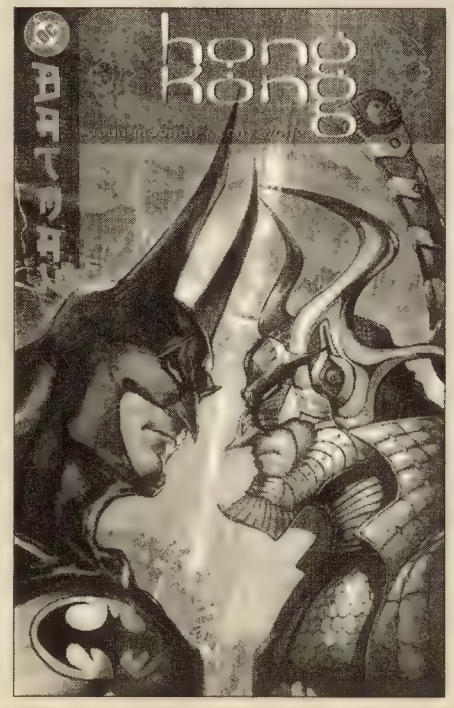
Ultimate Marvel Team-Up Vol 3 (Brian Michael Bendis & Terry Moore + Rick Mays; tpbk) Collects Ultimate Marvel Team-Up #14-16 and Ultimate Spider-Man Special. 136pg ... $12.99

Wolverine: Snikt! 4 (Tsutomu Nihei) In an alien land, against an army of inhuman enemies, Wolverine's own humanity threatens to slip away as he's overcome by a berserker rage. . $2.99

ON SALE FROM
AUG 13

Dark Horse

3 X 3 Eyes: The Shadow of the Kunlun (Yuzo Takada) Yakumo and Pai discover an ancient temple that may hold the key to returning the Pai and Yakumo to their human forms. However their journey of exploration becomes a



close-up

Batman: Hong Kong

DC Comics

Writer: Doug Moench

Artists: Tony Wong

When Batman uncovers Internet broadcasts of vicious snuff film murders, he follows the trail of clues to Hong Kong. But can his methods and techniques work in a foreign country with different laws and customs? Meanwhile, inspired by Batman, a new Hong Kong hero called the Night Dragon joins the search for the murderer. 128pg $24.95

ON SALE AUGUST 13

Illuminations

Highlights from August's releases

Selected by Martin "Biff" Averre

Dark Horse's new imprint Rocket will have little impact on sales in the UK, so forgive me if I don't mention the new number ones each month. But this month I am more excited about the release of **The Chronicles of Conan**, a series of four trade paperbacks that reprint the 24 issues of the Marvel series by Barry Windsor Smith and Roy Thomas. These comics have stood the test of time and I still get a thrill from reading **Conan** #11 – a double- sized bonanza entitled *The Talons of... Thak*. Bought for me by a caring sister, which then cost me time and money to track down #1-10 and 12 up.

These should sell as well as the *Marvel Essential Volumes*, or maybe more as they're in colour. You can see the young Windsor Smith's art unfold and improve as the series develops, linking with Roy Thomas's intuitive feel for Robert E. Howard's world of barbarians and magic, producing a synergy seldom surpassed. If you love art, action and comics, get these volumes; you won't be disappointed. Retailers, if you want great sales and happy customers, stock well. **Sales 5/5 Quality 5/5**

Years ago DC had a wonderful comic called **World's Finest**, which ran from 1951 to 1986, and from #71 featured Superman and Batman teaming up every issue. The decades saw pathos, wit, adventure and the plain whimsical. However, as Batman became grim and gritty in the '80s he began to hate Superman, or so grim and gritty writers would have it and to put two diametrically opposed heroes together was deemed outdated; so the series was cancelled. For me it was a treat to see how a writer could create stories to contain the pair. Now it returns, although entitled **Superman/Batman** it doesn't quite have the same ring. But I am prepared to give it a go. To kick the series off writer Jeph Loeb teams with artist Ed McGuiness; a promising start. If anyone has the talent to create a story fit for the kings of the DC Universe, it is Mr Loeb. Just check out Batman at the moment. **Sales 5/5 Quality 5/5**

One more to mention from DC is **Reign of the Zodiac**, which doesn't immediately say buy me, but as it is written by Keith Giffen and illustrated by Colleen Doran, it must be worth a lingering look. Said to be the 'life's work' of Keith Giffen, it is yet another science fiction cosmology teeming with warriors, nobles, fools and heroes which has the intriguing twist of a world where the 12 houses of the Zodiac rule a world which is a twin of Earth, but was once a part of Earth. Anyone remember the original Marvel **Warlock** mini where Counter Earth existed equidistant from the sun? Same sort of premise. I'm a sucker for this sort of tale. And, while we all think the Zodiac is nonsense, we all read our horoscopes. **Sales 5/5 Quality 5/5**

Celebrating 21 years of running a retail outlet I am pleased to say that I still get excited about genuine new titles that ooze, nay – exude promise. Marvel has two such titles this month. First up is **Supreme Power** #1: written by J. Michael Straczynski – who has shown in **Amazing Spider-Man** that he really understands the Marvel universe – and drawn by Gary Frank (okay, I'm biased; I love this guy's art). I hardly need to say more, but I will. It was inspired by the classic 1985 **Squadron Supreme** maxi series by Mark Gruenwald. JMS having looked at the real impact of extraordinary powers with his Image series **Rising Stars** will develop this much further. Another must buy. **Sales 10/5 Quality 5/5**

The other series to really excite my retailer sales buds is **1602**. This may be another of Marvel's ubiquitous miniseries, but it is written by Neil Gaiman. Not too sure of content as Marvel hasn't said much, but the teaser pages intrigue: "I have lived for almost 17 years. I die tomorrow. And this is what hurts the most: That I shall die on the ground. That I shall never take to the skies again, to dance, to laugh, to fly..." Illustrated by Andy Kubert and Richard Isanove, this has classic written all over it. **Sales 5/5 Quality 5/5**

fight for survival as the pair are once again pitted against the evil forces of Kaiyan Wang. 224pg b&w $17.95

Blade of the Immortal 81 (Hiroaki Samura) Fresh from a dramatic wedding that brought another sword school under his command, anti-villain Anotsu Kagehisa is on his way back to Edo. Accustomed to surprises on the road, Anotsu won't be fazed to encounter a strange combination of people in his path, all trying to stop him from moving forward, and all in big trouble when they face him. b&w $2.99

Cannon God Exaxxion: Stage 2 (Kenichi Sonoda) It's not easy being the saviour of Mankind when you're still in high school. Luckily, Hoichi Kano has a supercool integrated gunsuit at his disposal, just the ticket to take on the monstrous mechanical horrors of a pesky group of all-powerful alien invaders. Mature. 184pg b&w . $14.95

Cannon God Exaxxion 16 (Kenichi Sonoda) Hoichi and his team of ladies fighting a battle of information, trying to keep the alien forces from turning the human population against Exaxxion. b&w $2.99

Criminal Macabre 4 (Steve Niles & Ben Templesmith) What does a reclusive, germ-a-phobe, monster obsessed, flea raising, dead man have to do with the entire planet becoming overrun by monsters? $2.99

Grendel: God and the Devil 7 (Matt Wagner + John K. Snyder III & Bernie Mireault + Jeromy Cox) Corporate investigator Orion Assante continues his dangerous search for the truth, despite the government's forced dismantling of the Tower Commission. $3.50

new **Syn** 1 (Keith Giffen & Greg Titus + Julian Washburn) On a future Earth where humans are extinct and machines rule the planet, a directive is given – "know man". But when the directive is taken too far, and machines begin to act human, an enforcer is called in to remedy the situation. $2.99

DC Comics

Adventures of Superman 619 (Joe Casey & Derec Aucoin) A new candidate for the presidency makes his presence known, but his political agenda may be tied to a plot that could destroy the whole world. $2.25

Aquaman 9 (Rick Veitch & Yvel Guichet + Mark Propst) Aquaman and his archenemy, Black Manta, join forces to stop The Thirst from reanimating an army of corpses. $2.50

Astro City: Local Heroes 4 (Kurt Busiek & Brent Anderson; *WildStorm)* What happens when a lawyer argues the "death-like coma" and "evil twin" defences to keep a murderer out of jail? $2.95

Batgirl: Year One 9 (Scott Beatty + Chuck Dixon & Marcos Martin + Alvaro Lopez) Firefly and Killer Moth have turned their psychotic attention to the Gotham Police Headquarters, trying to make a name for themselves by leaving the place in ashes. $2.95

new **Batman: Death and the Maidens** 1 (Greg Rucka & Klaus Janson) After centuries, time has caught up with Ra's al Ghul, and only his greatest enemy can save him. Can these longtime enemies become allies? $2.95

one-shot **Batman: Hong Kong** (Doug Moench & Tony Wong) *See Close-Up on previous page.*

Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 170 *(Irresistible* 2 of 3; Tom Peyer & Tony Harris) Batman's hot on the trail of Frank Sharp, who desperately tries to use his mind-altering powers to manipulate the criminal underworld. $2.50

new **Dr Fate** 1 (Christopher Golden & Don Kramer + Prentis Rollins) Hector Hall moves to Salem, Massachusetts in an effort to lead a normal life, but when Caitlin Bibeau and her angry ex-boyfriend come to town, they bring with them a centuries-old evil that dates back to ancient Egypt. $2.50

Fables 16 *(Storybook Romance* 3 of 4; Bill Willingham & Mark Buckingham + Steve Leialoha; *Vertigo)* Snow and Bigby are lost in the deep woods, on the run from a pistol-packing motorchick bent on revenge. You've known for some time that he's really the Big Bad Wolf, but now, for the first time, we'll see what happens when Bigby has to huff and puff in order to save Snow's life. $2.50

Fallen Angel 2 (Peter David & David Lopez + Fernando Blanco) Asia Minor – the head of Bete Noire's narcotics business – calls in a debt. Lee reluctantly agrees to guard a shipment of an especially potent drug passing through Bete Noire, but quickly finds herself involved with a mysterious man presenting himself as a rival drug lord. $2.50

Gen^{13} #12 (Chris Claremont & Ramón F. Bachs + Sandra Hope; *WildStorm)* A sinister European power broker has a client looking for a young team, and the new Gen^{13} fits the bill. And he's got the perfect enticement to get them involved: evidence that the original Gen^{13} may still be alive and in his power. ... $2.95

one-shot **Gen^{13}: September Song** (Chris Claremont & various; *WildStorm;* tpbk) Collecting Gen13 #0-6. The mysterious Herod chooses four teens, granting them powers and leaving them with the enigmatic warning: You will be judged. 176pg $19.95

Gotham Central 10 (Greg Rucka & Michael Lark) After being kicked off the force and having her personal life destroyed, Montoya's been pushed too far – and not even Batman can calm her. $2.50

Green Arrow 29 *(Straight Shooter* 4 of 6; Judd Winick & Phil Hester + Ande Parks) Released from the hospital, Ollie recuperates at home with Connor and Mia attending to his every need. But when Joanna Pierce shows up, tension mounts! $2.50

H-E-R-O 7 (Will Pfeifer & Patrick Gleason + Christian Alamy) A group of guys calling themselves Chaos, Inc. finds the H-E-R-O device and records their crazy, irresponsible superpowered stunts on digicam, quickly turning them into the hottest thing on the underground Internet video circuit. $2.50

Human Defense Corps 4 (Ty Templeton & Clément Sauve Jr + Juan Vlasco) A dizzying 30,000 feet above the California Coastline, the Human Defense Corps embarks on its most dangerous mission yet – a séance. $2.50

JLA 84 *(Trial By Fire* 1 of 6; Joe Kelly & Doug Mahnke + Tom Nguyen) Supervillains across the globe are suddenly incapacitated by remorse over the deeds of their heinous pasts, leading the JLA to investigate the cause of this mysterious about-face. $2.25

JSA 51 (David S. Goyer + Geoff Johns & Leonard Kirk + Keith Champagne) Doctor Fate returns, as the final fate of Mordru is revealed during the aftermath of the *Princes of Darkness* saga. $2.50

Nightwing 84 (Devin Grayson & Rick Leonardi + Jesse Delperdang) An all-out throw-down between Nightwing and Tarantula as Dick Grayson tries to bring in Blüdhaven's newest vigilante for the murder of Chief Redhorn. $2.25

Scooby-Doo 75 (Earl Kress + Robbie Busch & various) The Mystery Inc gang's got a hip new look and a juiced-up Mystery Machine. $2.25

Stormwatch: Team Achilles 14 (Micah Ian Wright & C.P. Smith; *WildStorm)* As the planet deals with the fallout from the theft of the world's gold reserves, a new enemy emerges from America's past. $2.95

Superman & Batman: Generations III 8 (John Byrne; *Elseworlds)* Superman has learned the deadly secret behind Darkseid's attack on the Earth, but an attempt to take the battle to its source hurls the Man of Steel into the Smallville of 800 years in the past. $2.95

Teen Titans 2 (Geoff Johns & Mike McKone + Marlo Alquiza) The new Teen Titans head out to meet the new and improved Cyborg, but things won't go as planned. $2.50

Tokyo Storm Warning 3 (Warren Ellis & James Raiz + Andrew Currie; *WildStorm)* Zoe Flynn is piloting the most amazing vessel ever conceived – a massive ARCangel designed to battle the mutant monsters threatening Tokyo. But who designed these supermachines? $2.95

Tom Strong 22 (Alan Moore & Jerry Ordway + Karl Story; *America's Best Comics)* This new world has fallen to dark, sad depths. Sides are chosen, battle lines are drawn, family and friends are torn apart. It's a world that one woman desperately tries to prevent from ever existing. $2.95

one-shot **Wonder Woman: The Hiketeia** (Greg Rucka & J.G. Jones + Wade Von Grawbadger) Wonder Woman faces off against her JLA-companion Batman in this softcover version of the original hardcover graphic novel. 96pg $17.95

one-shot **Y: The Last Man – Cycles** (Brian K. Vaughan & Pia Guerra + José Marzán Jr; *Vertigo;* tpbk) Reprinting issues #6-10, Cycles features a special sketchbook section by artist and co-creator Pia Guerra. As Yorick Brown, the last man on Earth, begins to make his way across the country to California, he and his companions are forced to make an unscheduled stop in Marrisville, Ohio – a small town with a big secret. 128pg $12.95

Marvel

Amazing Spider-Man 56 *(Unintended Consequences* 2 of 2; J. Michael Straczynski + Fiona Avery & John Romita Jr) $2.25

Captain America 16 (Chuck Austen & Jae Lee; *Marvel Knights)* The final showdown between Captain America and the Interrogator as Cap faces down mysteries of his past. $2.99

Domino 4 (Joe Pruett & Brian Stelfreeze) Domino's journey comes to a head and all the mysteries of her past are finally revealed. $2.50

Emma Frost 2 *(Higher Learning* 2 of 6; Karl Bollers & Randy Green) A young Emma Frost continues to explore the ramifications of her blossoming powers. $2.50

one-shot **Essential Human Torch** Vol 1 (Stan Lee & Jack Kirby + various; tpbk) The Fantastic Four's Human Torch earliest solo sagas are collected in their entirety in a single volume, some reprinted for the first time ever! Collects Strange Tales #101-134 and Annual #2. 504pg b&w $14.99

Fantastic Four 502 *(Fifth Wheel* 2 of 2; Mark Waid & Casey Jones) The FF must deal with scars both external and internal in the aftermath of *Unthinkable*. . $2.25

Incredible Hulk 59 *(Hide In Plain Sight* 5 of 5; Bruce Jones & Leandro Fernandez) The conclusion of the steel-cage grudge match between the Hulk and the Absorbing Man. $2.25

Iron Man 71 *(Vegas Bleeds Neon* 2 of 3; Robin Laws & Robert Teranishi) A new suit of special armour is called into action as Stark faces peril in Sin City. $2.99

Human Torch 5 *(Burn* 5 of 6; Karl Kesel & Skottie Young) To find the combustion killer, the Torch must train to become everything he's not. .. $2.50

Kingpin 3 (Bruce Jones & Sean Phillips + Klaus Janson) As the power-hungry Wilson Fisk conquers the violent gangs of Hell's Kitchen one crew at a time, a new battleground emerges in his quest for absolute power. $2.50

new **Marvel 1602** 1 (Neil Gaiman & Andy Kubert + Richard Isanove) Neil Gaiman's latest offering. 40pg $3.50

Punisher 30 *(Streets of Loredo* 3 of 4; Garth Ennis & Cam Kennedy; cover by Tim Bradstreet; *Marvel Knights)* The Punisher delves more into the mystery of a strange gunrunning town in Texas. $2.99

Spectacular Spider-Man 3 (Paul Jenkins & Humberto Ramos) Spidey plays detective and tries to uncover the connection between Venom and his latest victims. $2.25

Ultimate Spider-Man 44 *(Irresponsible* 5; Brian Michael Bendis & Mark Bagley) Spider-Man was taken aboard the X-Men's Blackbird jet. But when it suddenly explodes in mid-flight, have both the misunderstood mutants and the fledgling superhero perished? $2.25

Ultimate X-Men 36 *(Blockbuster!* 3 of 6; Brian Michael Bendis & David Finch; *Vertigo)* Wolverine and Spidey struggle to find the hidden enemy who has targeted Wolverine for execution. $2.25

X-Men: Evolution Vol 2 (Devin Grayson + Jay Faerber & by UDON + J.J. Kirby; tpbk) Collects X-Men: Evolution #5-9. 120pg $11.99

ON SALE FROM

AUG 20

Dark Horse

one-shot **American Splendor: Unsung Hero** (Harvey Pekar & David Collier) Robert McNeill is an ordinary man who's lived an extraordinary life. McNeill recounts his time spent as a G.I. in Vietnam, on a tour through that surreal and horrific landscape. 80pg b&w $11.95

Club 9 Vol 2 (Makoto Kobayashi) When country girl Haruo Hattori left the farm and her nutty family for college in the big city, she promised to remain true to her high school sweetheart, but that was before she began work at Club 9, one of the hottest hostess bars in the Ginza, where temptation rears its ugly head on a nightly basis. Mature. 192pg b&w $15.95

one-shot **The Dark Horse Book of Hauntings** (various; hbk) Hardcover book with original short stories. The longest story in The Dark Horse Book of Hauntings is also Mike Mignola's only new Hellboy adventure in 2003. 96pg $14.95

The Goon 2 (Eric Powell) The Goon battles a family of grave robbers eager to supply the Zombie Priest with fixin's for his army of the dead. Things get bad for everyone when they wind up in Hobo Jungle: A forest where the destitute have given up train hopping for a feral life of cannibalism in the wild. $2.99

Hell 2 (Brian Augustyn & Todd Demong + Tim Kane) In the past hour Corey Rollins has been pursued by FBI agents, stumbled across a secret military base, been thrown into a teleportation device that has transported him to an island known as Hell, and now he's surrounded by a welcoming committee of monstrous ape men. $2.99

Kiss 12 (Mike Baron & Mel Rubi + Derek Fridolfs) While investigating a sudden surge in the Earth's monster population, the internally embattled Four Who Are One – along with their newest recruits, Christine 16 and Mr Speed – are sucked into another, terrifying dimension. $2.99

one-shot **Scarlet Traces** (Ian Edginton & D'israeli) *See Close-Up, below.*

Star Wars: Republic 57 *(The Battle of Jabiim* 3 of 4; Haden Blackman and Brian Ching) Anakin Skywalker receives new orders to report to a rear echelon position-just as the Padawan Pack is commanded to hold an indefensible position against an overwhelming Separatist attack. $2.99

DC Comics

American Century 27 (Howard Chaykin + David Tischman & Lan Medina + John Stokes; *Vertigo)* Harry Kraft's adventures go out with a bang and a whimper, thanks to a hot night with Broadway bombshell Mindy Marin. $2.75

Arrowsmith 2 (Kurt Busiek & Carlos Pacheco + Jesús Merino; *WildStorm)* War, magic and romance abound as Fletcher Arrowsmith commences his training as a mystical aviator in 1915 New York. But with the world gripped by a global war and death looming, is there time for a young man to fall in love? $2.95

Batgirl 43 (Dylan Horrocks & Adrian Sibar + Andy Owens) Batman and Batgirl have tracked Dr Death to Tarakstan, home of the superpowered terrorist known as the Black Wind. $2.50

Batman Adventures 5 (Dan Slott + Ty Templeton & Terry Beatty + Templeton) Private detective Harvey Bullock is chained to a suitcase that everyone wants – including a marksman named Deadshot! $2.25

Batman: Gotham Knights 44 (Scott Beatty + Jill Thompson & Dave Ross + John Floyd) As events in the present force Bruce Wayne to look into the past, some of the actions and events surrounding the demise of the second Robin become clearer. 40pg $2.75

Birds of Prey 58 (Gail Simone & Ed Benes + Alex Lei) Savant's true demands for Oracle are revealed, as she's given 24 hours to discover Batman's true identity. $2.50

new **Cinnamon: El Ciclo** 1 (Jen Van Meter & Francisco Paronzini + Robert Campanella) Cinnamon has drifted for years as a hired gun along the Mexican border, but when a shady job takes her north, she must face up to the ghosts that haunt her dark past. $2.50

JLA: Scary Monsters 6 (Chris Claremont & Josh Hood + Sean Parsons) It's the JLA's darkest hour, as its members are infected one by one with the monster-making virus! $2.50

JLA: The Obsidian Age Book Two (various; tpbk) Collects JLA #72-76, as the JLAers fight back from death to stop the Ancients from rewriting history. Aquaman has been found, but now he and the Atlanteans must be rescued. 160pg $12.95

Just Imagine Stan Lee Creating the DC Universe Book Two (Stan Lee + Michael Uslan & various; tpbk) Reprints Just Imagine Stan Lee With Kevin Maguire Creating The Flash, ...With Jerry Ordway Creating The JLA, ...With John Byrne Creating Robin, ...With Gary Frank Creating Shazam, and more. 256pg $19.95

Lucifer 41 (Mike Carey & David Hahn; *Vertigo)* In *Sisters of Mercy*, hybrid angel Elaine Belloc and her dead best friend Mona get three hours to run around London while their futures hang in the balance. $2.50

Outsiders 3 (Judd Winick & Tom Raney + Scott Hanna) The Outsiders have their hands full with Gorilla Grodd and his army of angry apes! $2.50

The Possessed 2 (Geoff Johns + Kris Grimminger & Liam Sharp; *WildStorm)* The exorcists storm a Philadelphia high-rise where a First Communion ceremony has been upended by the violent possession of a young boy, coming face-to-face with a demonic spirit that will go to any lengths to stay in our world. $2.95

The Powerpuff Girls 41 (Robbie Busch + John Rozum & Christopher Cook + Mike DeCarlo) Townsville heats up when Buttercup eats garlic pizza, and we're not pepperoni. $2.25

Robin 117 (Jon Lewis & Pete Woods + Andrew Pepoy) Vague warnings from beyond time itself have Robin convinced that he's about to be betrayed by someone close to him. $2.25

Sleeper 8 (Ed Brubaker & Sean Phillips) On the hunt for Lynch's secret notebook, Holden meets his mirror-image, a government agent who claims to be an operative for TAO. $2.95

new **Smax** 1 (Alan Moore & Zander Cannon; *America's Best Comics)* When Jeff Smax's beloved uncle passes away, the Top 10 officer is called back to his homeworld with his partner, Robyn *Toybox* Slinger. . $2.95

new **Superman/Batman** 1 (Jeph Loeb & Ed McGuinness + Dexter Vines) A new, improved Metallo attacks both Metropolis and Gotham, bringing the guardians of each city together for a monumental battle! Variant cover. $2.95

Superman: Metropolis 7 (Chuck Austen & Teddy Kristiansen) An insightful and different take on Superman and Jimmy Olsen's friendship, as Jimmy realises that he's lost Lena, the girl in the Tech. $2.95

one-shot **Wildcats Version 3.0: Brand Building** (Joe Casey & Dustin Nguyen + Richard Friend; *WildStorm)* The first six issues of the series by Joe Casey, Dustin Nguyen and Richard Friend are collected in one volume. On the surface, Jack Marlowe is a strong-willed and visionary businessman, but who can tell just what devious schemes are hatching under his android exterior? 160pg .. $14.95

Wonder Woman 195 (Greg Rucka & Drew Johnson + Ray Snyder) While Wonder Woman fights to capture the brutal dictator of an African nation, a new hire at the Themysciran Embassy discovers just how enormous Diana's mission truly is. $2.25

Y: The Last Man 14 *(One Small Step* 4 of 5; Brian K. Vaughan & Pia Guerra + José Marzan Jr; *Vertigo)* Take three astronauts, one surface-to-air missile launcher, and a pair of Mossad-issue handcuffs – and you'd only have half the ingredients of the last man on earth's most dangerous escape act. $2.95

Marvel

Agent X #13 (Gail Simone & UDON) The Mighty Marvel Merc with no memory returns – and so does Deadpool. $2.99

Captain Marvel 13 (Peter David & Michael Ryan) Captain Marvel saves the planet Kahfan from the sinister Badoon, and then refuses to leave. $2.99

Crew 4 *(Big Trobule* 4; Priest & Joe Bennett) The Crew stands Assembled – and at each other's throats. $2.50

Daredevil 50 *(Hardcore* 5 of 5; Brian Michael Bendis & Alex Maleev; *Marvel Knights)* Featuring a series-changing surprise ending. $2.99

Exiles 32 *(Avengers Forever* 2; Judd Winnick & James Calafiore) The team enters a reality where the Avengers are vampires. Will the team be able to stop them or will they become a part of their undead army? $2.99

new **Gun Theory** 1 (Daniel Way & Jon Proctor) Harvey is a contract killer who surfaces only to cap fools and get paid – a ghost cutting a bloody swath through the living world, invisible and therefore untouchable. $2.50

Marvel Masterworks: The Silver Surfer Vol 2 (various; hbk) Collects Silver Surfer Vol 1 #7-18. 272pg $49.94

Namor 5 (Bill Jemas + Andi Watson & Salvador Larroca) The first story arc continues as Namor gets to know more about his new girlfriend, Sandy – unaware of the trouble brewing both on land and below the surface. $2.25

New Mutants 4 (Christina Weir + Nunzio Defilippis & Keron Grant) Dani's mutant recruitment leads her to Chicago, where she finds the child she is after has already made contact with another mutant – Dani's old teammate Karma. .. $2.50

New X-Men 145 (Grant Morrison & Chris Bachalo) Wolverine, Cyclops and Fantomex's adventure comes to a close as Logan learns more about his mysterious past. $2.25

Runaways 5 *(Pride & Joy* 5 of 6; Brian K. Vaughan & Adrian Alphona) The Runaways face a new threat, and it's from one of their own. $2.50

Spider-Man & Wolverine 3 (Brett Matthews & Vatche Mavlian) Spider-Man & Wolverine continue their globetrotting investigation. $2.99

one-shot **Startling Stories: The Thing – Last Line of Defense** 1 (Ben Zimmerman & Don Kramer) Ben Grimm is the last line of defence. But what's it like to live inside his rock-hard skin? 48pg $3.50

Thor Legends Vol 2: Walt Simonson Book II (Walter Simonson) Continuing the collection of Simonson's run, reprinting Thor #349-355 and #357-359. 240pg $24.99

Uncanny X-Men 430 *(The Draco* 2 of 6; Chuck Austen & Philip Tan) The entire X-Men team stars as it learns the secrets of Nightcrawler's true origin. $2.25

Wolverine 4 *(The Brothers* 4 of 5; Greg Rucka & Darick Robertson) Logan pops the claws as he edges closer and closer to the identity of Lucy's murderer. $2.25

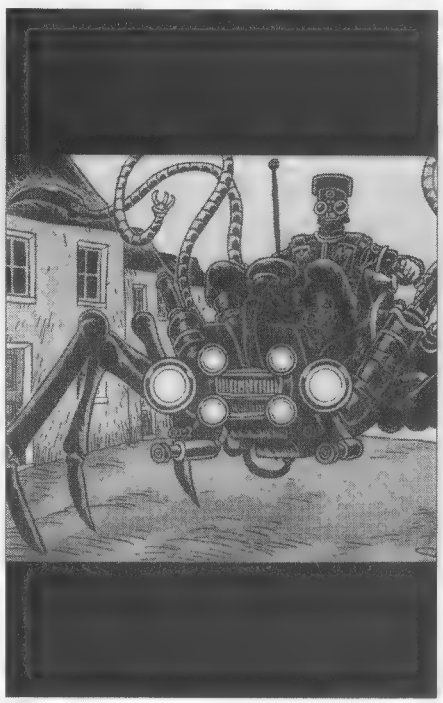
ON SALE FROM

AUG 27

Dark Horse

Astro Boy Vol 18 (Osamu Tezuka) Action, comedy, and humanity, with a few monsters, aliens, and giant robots. 216pg b&w $9.95

Buffy the Vampire Slayer 60 (Fabian Nicieza & Cliff Richards) Buffy Summers has faced vampires, demons and monsters but now she must face there scariest thing of all: the divorce of her parents. $2.99



close-up

Scarlet Traces

Dark Horse Comics

Writer: Ian Edginton

Artist: D'israeli

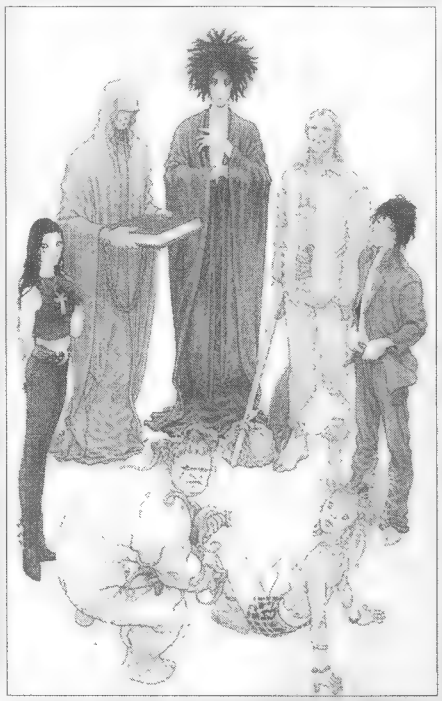
The industrious Victorians have assimilated the Martian technologies into their everyday lives. Hansom cabs now scuttle along the Capital's streets on multi-limbed crab legs and the terrible monopoly of the Martian heat-ray has assured the dominance of the British Empire over two-thirds of the Earth's surface. Them were the days, eh? 88pg $14.95

ON SALE AUGUST 20

new **Galactic** 1 (Jim Krueger & Sanford Greene + Greg Adams) Living with his single mum and searching for his missing, drug-addicted brother, young Heath barely gets by. Heath doesn't know, though, that he's being watched by Galactic, one of the most powerful groups in the universe. $2.99

Hellboy: Weird Tales 4 (various) In a story of a blighted house, the flame-throwing Liz Sherman is forced to deal with her family, who she killed when she was a little girl. $2.99

new **Ultraman Tiga** 1 (Tony Wong & Khoo Fuk Lung) In the year 2049, the Earth has settled into a period of relative peace, thanks in large part to the global efforts of GUTS – the Global Unlimited Task Squad – an international alliance dedicated to protecting mankind from threats within the planet and beyond. But when a mysterious meteor carrying an ominous message crashes next to GUTS headquarters, it heralds the end of peacetime and the return of the giant monsters that terrorised humanity many millions of years ago. 40pg $3.99



close-up

The Sandman: Endless Nights

Vertigo

Writer: Neil Gaiman

Artists: various

Presenting seven tales – one for each of the Endless family members – illustrated by seven different artists. P. Craig Russell draws the story of Death, Milo Nanara encounters Desire, Bill Sienkiewicz conquers Delirium, Miguelanxo Prado conjures Dream, Barron Storey etches Despair, Glenn Fabry depicts Destruction, and Frank Quitely tackles Destiny. 160pg . $24.95

ON SALE AUGUST 27

DC Comics

Batman 618 (Jeph Loeb & Jim Lee + Scott Williams) The Dark Knight faces the battle of his life. But given the betrayals he's discovered, can Batman possibly fight the one person whom he cannot – and will not – fight? $2.25

new **Batman: Tenses** 1 (Joe Casey & Cully Hamner + Dexter Vines) A serial killer stalks the streets of Gotham! As if that's not bad enough, the Dark Knight must figure out how to stop a madman who can see into the future. 64pg $6.95

Batman/Superman/Wonder Woman: Trinity 3 (Matt Wagner) While attempting to save the world from complete and utter destruction, an uneasy bond is formed by three new allies. Can they rally to defeat the mysterious eco-terrorist who commands the power to bring the world to its knees? 64pg $6.95

Beware the Creeper 5 (of 5; Jason Hall & Cliff Chiang; *Vertigo)* With her life quickly spiralling out of control, it's time for The Creeper to confess her sins and answer for her crimes. $5.95

Cartoon Cartoons 21 (various) Dexter the boy genius uses science to help his dad battle a backyard pest. Nothing can go wrong, surely? This and many more cartoon cartoons. ... $2.25

Catwoman 22 (Ed Brubaker & Cameron Stewart) Catwoman's road trip has brought her to the underworld of Keystone City and an unlikely pairing with Captain Cold. The only way she can get the info she needs out of the rogue is to aid him in a quest that will take them deep into the Flash legacy, and to places she may not want to go. $2.50

Empire 2 (Mark Waid & Barry Kitson + James Pascoe) Another nation has fallen into the hands of the empire, yet Golgoth isn't happy. It's one thing to build an empire – it's quite another thing to maintain control of it. $2.50

one-shot **Epicurus the Sage** (William Messner-Loebs & Sam Kieth) Collects both the original Epicurus graphic novels, along with the hard-to-find 15-page tale from Fast Forward #3. 160pg $19.95

The Filth 13 (Grant Morrison & Chris Weston + Gary Erskine; *Vertigo)* It's the end of the line for Ned Slade as the Hand organisation crumbles around him and the final truth is revealed. $2.95

The Flash 201 (Geoff Johns & Alberto Dose) In the aftermath of the most horrific attack on The Flash ever, the Scarlet Speedster is nowhere to be found. As Keystone City becomes a breeding ground for lethal street races and rogues, a new type of Flash emerges – a new identity. $2.25

Global Frequency 11 (Warren Ellis & Jason Pearson; *WildStorm)* Five years ago, Aleph was the brilliant underachiever on campus – then she met Miranda Zero, and her life changed. Now she's the focal point of the Global Frequency rescue organization, coordinating crucial data during each operation. $2.95

Green Lantern 168 (Ben Raab & Rick Burchett + Rodney Ramos) Green Lantern's efforts to restore order in outer space have brought him some unwanted attention. Stopping criminals and disasters is one thing, but being deemed a god by an entire planet is something he doesn't want to get mixed up in. $2.25

Hellblazer 187 *(Bred in the Bone* 1 of 2; Mike Carey & Doug Alexander; *Vertigo)* In 1983, off the bleak coasts of Scotland, John Constantine faced and contained an ancient, unnatural evil. But old monsters refuse to lie down, and 20 years later his niece Gemma must deal with the consequences of John's actions. $2.75

new **Human Target** 1 (Peter Milligan & Javier Pulido) Christopher Chance has been living as Frank White, but that idyllic new existence is about to come crashing down around him as the line between reality and illusion becomes increasingly blurry. 40pg $2.95

JLA 85 (Joe Kelly & Doug Mahnke and Tom Nguyen) The world's villains are on the verge of mass suicide, and Firestorm has just been attacked in the JLA's own backyard. If the Justice League doesn't figure out who's behind the chaos soon, they'll be the next victims. $2.25

The Legion 23 (Dan Abnett + Andy Lanning & Chris Batista + Mark Farmer) The heroes of the 31st century find themselves faced with the most comprehensive, stealthiest conquest of civilisation ever undertaken. $2.50

The Losers 3 *(Goliath* 2 of 5; Andy Diggle & Jock; *Vertigo)* The Goliath heist is going well. Maybe too well. Clay thinks his team is all on the same page, but when Aisha suddenly appears on the scene, suspicions are raised that she might not be what she appears. $2.95

Planetary 16 (Warren Ellis & John Cassaday) With The Four momentarily in disarray, Elijah Snow initiates the second part of his comeback plan: to hunt down and discover the truth about Anna Hark, daughter of the criminal genius of the '30s, who died in the Adirondacks with the rest of Axel Brass' associates. $2.95

one-shot **The Planetary Reader** (Warren Ellis & John Cassaday; *WildStorm)* Collects Planetary #13-15. Witness the secret history of Elijah Snow, a man who's been tracking strange occurrences since the late 1800s. 72pg $5.95

Red 2 (Warren Ellis & Cully Hamner; *WildStorm)* Paul Moses, the C.I.A.'s retired killer extraordinaire, has been reactivated following an attempt on his life... an attempt authorised by the new Director of the CIA. $2.95

new **Reign of the Zodiac** 1 (Keith Giffen & Colleen Doran + Bob Wiacek) An original sci-fi cosmology with warriors, politicians, nobles, knaves, heroes, damned fools, and a war that's coming to Earth – tomorrow! $2.75

one-shot **The Sandman: Endless Nights** (Neil Gaiman & various; hbk) *See Close-Up, above.*

one-shot **The Silver Age Teen Titans Archives** Vol 1 (Bob Haney & Nick Cardy + Bruno Premiani; hbk) Collecting The Brave & The Bold #54 and #60, Showcase #59, and Teen Titans #1-5. 204pg $49.95

Superman 196 (Steven T. Seagle & Scott McDaniel + Andy Owens) Terror strikes Metropolis, and Superman must make a critical decision that results in the birth of a new adversary who wants to end all conflicts. $2.25

Superman & Batman: Generations II (John Byrne; *Elseworlds;* tpbk) Imagine if Superman and Batman aged normally from their debuts in 1938 and 1939! How would their legacies be passed on to future generations of heroes? 200pg $19.95

Sweatshop 5 (Peter Bagge & Bagge) The entire Sweatshop crew attends a large comicbook convention – each with his or her own reason for going. For Mel, it's vainglory, while romance and business opportunities occupy the minds of his staff members. $2.95

Terra Obscura 3 (Alan Moore + Peter Hogan & Yanick Paquette + Karl Story; *America's Best Comics)* The Null Zone sweeping across the Western United States and disrupting all electrical devices has been deemed a National Emergency. The President has reunited S.M.A.S.H. Will the science heroes be able to stop this perplexing phenomenon? $2.95

Thundercats: Dogs of War 3 (John Layman & Brett Booth + Al Vey; *WildStorm)* The alliance between Lion-O's Thundercats and Mumm-Ra's mutants is off to a rocky start. Tempers flare, mistrust abounds, and it's a safe bet there's a traitor in their midst. Variant cover. $2.95

Wildcats Version 3.0 #13 (Joe Casey & Dustin Nguyen + Richard Friend; *WildStorm)* Fetauring the return of a long-lost cast member, as we catch up with a certain white-haired Coda warrior slicing her way across Europe. $2.95

Marvel

Amazing Spider-Man 57 (J. Michael Straczynski & John Romita Jr) Two part story arc leading up to October's Amazing Spider-Man #500. ..... $2.25

Avengers 70 *(Red Zone* 6 of 6; Geoff Johns & Olivier Coipel) The Avengers risk all to halt the spread of the deadly Red Zone bacteria. $2.25

Born 3 (Garth Ennis & Darick Robertson) The ugly truth of war comes alive as Captain Frank Castle's base is attacked. $3.50

one-shot **Cage** (Brian Azzarello & Richard Corben; tpbk) Investigating the murder of a teenage girl, Cage suddenly learns that a three-way gang war is under way for control of the turf he calls home. 120pg $13.99

Crimson Dynamo 2 (John Jackson Miller & Steve Ellis) Gennady Gavrilov has never had much, and now that he's found what may be the world's coolest video game, he's not planning on giving it up. $2.50

Earth X Vol 4: Paradise X Book I (Jim Krueger + Alex Ross & Doug Braithwaite; tpbk) Will the heroes of Earth be able to solve the problems of the Paradise they helped create? Collects Heralds #1-3, Paradise X #0-5 and XEN Special. 304pg $29.99

Fantastic Four 503 *(Authoritative Action* 1 of 6; Mark Waid & Howard Porter) Doom has been defeated, but bearing the scars of their last encounter, Reed isn't content just to stop there. $2.50

Hulk: Nightmerica 3 (Robin Laws & Brian Ashmore) The quest for the sinister place called Nightmerica continues as Banner and Chrissie search for the one man who may hold the clue to its many mysteries. $2.99

Inhumans 4 *(Culture Shock* 1 of 3; Sean McKeever & Matthew Clark) The young Inhumans try to adjust to Earth culture. $2.50

Marvel Masterworks: The Amazing Spider-Man Vol 2 (various; hbk) Featuring the first appearance by the Green Goblin, and Spidey's first meetings with Daredevil and the Hulk. Collects Amazing Spider-Man Vol 1 #11-19 and Annual #1. 288pg $49.99

Mystique 5 *(Dead Drop Gorgeous* 5 of 6; Brian K. Vaughan & Jorge Lucas) Mystique gets in deeper trouble as she searches for the stolen Sentinel technology. $2.99

Paradise X: X (Jim Krueger & Doug Braithwaite) The conclusion of the Paradise X series and of the entire Earth X trilogy. Learn the final fate of the cosmos in this final issue. $2.99

Silver Surfer 2 (Stacy Weiss + Dan Chariton & Milx) Her little girl has been abducted by a mysterious silver alien from the stars – how far will Denise Waters go to get her daughter back? $2.25

Startling Stories: Thing – Night Falls on Yancy Street 4 (of 4; Evan Dorkin & Dean Haspiel) Only time will tell if the sun will rise again for Ben Grimm. 40pg $3.50

Thor: Vikings 2 (Garth Ennis & Glenn Fabry) Thor and Doctor Strange team-up to try to find a way to defeat the invincible zombie Vikings that have invaded Manhattan. $3.50

Ultimate Spider-Man 45 *(Irresponsible* 6; Brian Michael Bendis & Mark Bagley) Spider-Man is taken aboard the X-Men's blackbird jet. But when it suddenly explodes in mid-flight, have both the misunderstood mutants and the fledgling superhero perished? The first original Ultimate villain debuts. $2.25

Venom 4 *(Shiver* 4 of 5; Daniel Way & Francisco Herrera) The mysteries of Venom's appearance in the Arctic continue to be revealed. $2.25

Weapon X 12 (Frank Tieri & Georges Jeanty) Cable, Domino and the rest of the mutant Underground make their stand against the Director, Sabretooth & Weapon X. $2.99

X-Statix Vol 2: Good Guys & Bad Guys (Peter Milligan & Mike Allred; tpbk) Will the team's careers end at their own hands? Collects X-Statix #6-10; Wolverine/Doop #1-2 and Mike Allred's X-Men Unlimited #41 story. 176pg $15.99

X-Statix 12 (Peter Milligan & Mike Allred) Puts the spotlight on Dead-Girl as X-Statix gears up for next month's new story arc. $2.99

X-Treme X-Men 30 *(God Loves, Man Kills 2* #6 of 6; Chris Claremont & Igor Kordey + Scott Hanna) The X-Treme Team faces off against Stryker and discovers the secret of Mt. Haven. Will Kitty Pryde be forced to kill in order to save the lives of her friends? $2.99

Details of August on sale US indies, international and UK newsstand titles will be published next issue.

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Networks

Comics news and gossip on the Internet

Compiled by Chris Rice and the CI team of Netmites

Rich Johnston's LYING IN THE GUTTER

The mild-mannered creator/writer of the Internet's original comics industry rumour and news column has outraged many a publisher and survived more than one change of website. But, despite several attempts to stop it, the Squiddy Award-winning gutterpress site continues to thrive, with over 20,000 hits a week at its new home of www.comicbookresources.com

From his unique vantage point, Rich often scoops the industry newshounds with his stories. Here are the highlights from this month's Gutter...

X Marks the Spot

John Romita Jr has denied he's leaving **Amazing Spider-Man** which left **Uncanny X-Men** as the rumoured title that Salvador LaRocca may now take up. C*omicscontinuum.com* confirmed this over the weekend – a move that some have interpreted as a slap in Claremont's face on **X-Treme X-Men**, taking the artist to another book against his will, then putting him on Claremont's competition. The website currently states that the Salvador Larocca run will include 16 issues between 435-455, with Philip Tan doing fill-ins on four issues.

Groth Culture

The Fantagraphics Appeal continues apace. I've just bought a wodge of specially priced hardback **Love And Rockets** – and it seems I'm not alone. Gary Groth tells me, "We didn't have the manpower over the weekend to add up all the numbers and we haven't been able to process all the orders, but it appears as though we are about two thirds of the way to our goal of $80,000."

"We're now pretty optimistic that we can make it with a little more flogging. The response has been pretty overwhelming and heartening. If we can make a little more during this period of unprecedented support, we wouldn't discourage it. We still have a back debt – royalties and profit sharing, for example, that we've slipped behind on – that we are planning to pay off over the next 24 months and any dent we can make in that would help us over the long haul. But, if we hit the $80,000 mark, we'll be able to catch up with our printers and suppliers, and that was our immediate and essential goal."

Fantagraphics needs your help right now, or it may go away. Fantagraphics has its critics, mainly attacking it for the snobbishness and exclusivity of its members. Well fuck that, we're all snobs about something. If Fantagraphics can help keep standards and quality high enough, this can only be good for the medium. And if Fantagraphics goes, a lot of work will go out of print, a number of other publishers will fall and the cultural impact on the medium will be heavy. It's also refreshing to hear such a company being so open about its situation.

Tales From The Sunderland

Bryan Talbot's **Alice In Sunderland** is a project without a publisher. From the author of the acclaimed **Luther Arkwright**, one of the most borrowed graphic novels in libraries, **A Tale Of One Bad Rat**, and the inspiration for the likes of Alan Moore and Grant Morrison, Bryan Talbot goes deeper into his muse with this most remarkable book. **Alice In Sunderland** is a 250-page black and white with spot colour graphic novel, Bryan describes as a "Portmanteau Comic" and hopes it's "like nothing you've seen before."

Bryan continues, "The theme is Lewis Carroll and his muse, Alice Liddell, told in a dream-logic documentary style, but the book really is about history and storytelling and contains many other

continued on next page...

Net sightings

Arn Saba Found!

NETWORKS *was rather suprised to discover the following story, as reported by the* ***National Enquirer****'s JK Dineen on their website:*

When narcotics cops raided a Russian Hill apartment Tuesday night, they did more than confiscate the largest stash of magic mushrooms this city *[San Francisco]* has seen in 20 years. They answered a question some underground comics buffs have been asking for years: What on earth happened to Arn Saba?

As it turned out, Saba – who earned his place in underground comics history with the series **Neil The Horse** – had been quite busy. He had moved from Toronto to San Francisco. He had had a sex-change operation, becoming Katherine Collins. And she had become a businesswoman, a highly organized purveyor of psychedelic drugs who distributed business cards and whose services were available each day from 2 pm to 10 pm, according to police.

At 7:30 on Tuesday night, police broke down the door at 1525 Larkin Street, a cluttered one-bedroom apartment just off of Sacramento Street. There they found six half-filled trash bags of magic mushrooms – a stash that weighed 6½ pounds and had a street value of $20,000.

Also netted in the operation was about four pounds of marijuana, worth between $12,000 and $15,000, according to police. Although cops say huge bags of weed and 'shrooms lay in plain sight on the kitchen table, Collins was rather surprised to see them break down her front door. "She said, 'What you guys want?' When we explained we had a warrant, she was immediately very cooperative and didn't freak out at all," said an undercover narcotics inspector who worked on the three-month investigation.

On Wednesday afternoon, having made bail, Collins (55) was very friendly when a reporter knocked on the door. A former magazine journalist who wrote on cartoons and pop culture for the **Toronto Star**, Collins said she would love to tell her story but only after talking to her attorneys. "I need to get some advice first," said Collins, who was wearing a flowing skirt and blue sweater.

"This is definitely going to be something I'll want to talk about. I'm not going to keep this under wraps."

Vice and narcotics Captain Tim Hettrick said magic mushrooms have been on the increase in the gay party scene.

"We've been making some mushroom cases with gay drug dealers where it's getting to the raves and dance clubs," he said. "(Collins) may have been the connection."

While Collins lives in a modest apartment with framed Neil The Horse illustrations in the hallway, police say her business was lucrative. They confiscated $7,569 in cash, as well as records hinting she was wiring most of her profits to Canada.

As Arn Saba, Collins started publishing comics in newspapers and magazines in 1975. Andrew Farago, gallery manager at the San Francisco Cartoon Museum, said Saba emerged in the second wave of the underground comics movement, a time when many comic artists struggled. "**Neil The Horse** definitely has a reputation in the industry, but (Saba) has totally fallen off the map," said Farago. "Nobody knew he was here. He probably hasn't done anything in almost 20 years and that is an eternity in the comics business."

A 1981 United Press International feature on Saba characterizes Neil The Horse as an "unlikely superhero" who knocked around with a "crusty old cat named Soapy and a vivacious blond puppet named Mam'selle Poupee." **Neil The Horse** was a bimonthly comicbook series for several years and a radio version was broadcast on the Canadian Broadcast Corporation.

"People say movies are getting more like real life, but I say why not make the real life more like the movies," Saba said in 1981. *Apparently, mushrooms helped make that transition.* Networks *is speechless.*

The End of ABC

GENE Ha is one of Networks' *favourite artists, and is responsible for the art on one of the best books of the last few years, Alan Moore's* ***Top Ten****.*

He's currently working on the prequel to that series, the graphic novel ***49-ers****, and has been keeping fans up to date on his website. Recently he's detailed some of the upcoming news for the whole ABC universe relating to Moore's recent announcement that he'll be retiring from mainstream comics in the next year or so:*

Anyhoo, he *[Moore]* assured me that he'll finish his run on all the ABC books before he takes his break from lycra S/M fetish comics (my name for the violent superhero genre). I expected as much from him, but it's nice to hear him say it.

And he confirmed he's going to destroy the ABC Universe. I thought he might have meant something metaphorical when I first heard of this plan. And he did. But he also plans to destroy the world. He noted that most comics universes aren't

really destroyed; they just run out of financing. Alan wants to be the first writer to purposefully destroy an imprint's whole world.

Alan's been writing at a madman's pace for almost seven years now. An artist who follows Alan's work closely says that Alan runs low on cash, then does some very commercial work. When he has enough cash and he gets bored with that, he does his experimental and edgy work. His experimental stuff can turn out to be commercially successful too (**From Hell**), of course.

We fans of **League of Extraordinary Gentlemen** will be pleased to know that he still wants to keep writing **LoEG** projects after he stops writing ABC work. In truth, **LoEG** isn't really a part of the ABC stuff. I think it's the best action comic out today, so that makes me pretty damn happy. When I told him he'd chosen an ideal time period for **LoEG**, he said he feels free to set **LoEG** stories in any era. He could have just as much fun setting the stories in fictional futures instead of fictional pasts.

Also, Alan would be happy to let other writers or artists keep on writing ABC projects. While the ABC Universe will be well and truly killed off, stories set before the end are still possible. I would love to see what Zander Cannon would do with a **Top Ten** story, and I'd love to draw it.

Which would all seem to be quite good news, really. ***LoEG*** *is certainly the jewel in the ABC line, so it's continued existence would certainly be a good thing if Moore is truly planning to annihilate his own universe.*

That said, Networks *would cheerfully pay good money to buy Moore's shopping lists if that was all he was writing. He didn't just win "Best Writer of All Time" again for nothing y'know.*

Is she or isn't she?

AGENT X *is a book that's been mentioned once or twice before here, specifically in relation to a hoax story about a new creative team. In that spirit, in her "*You'll All Be Sorry*"* (Yabs) *column on the* Comic Book Resources *site, Gail Simone appears to have posted her own hoax story about the book she launched to critical acclaim, only to be unceremoniously booted off after six issues. Or is it a hoax? You decide:*

Simone/Udon/Deadpool to Return to **Agent X**: Thousands of hilarity-loving readers were puzzled and angered by the faux-'news' story appearing in this very edition of Buzzline. When plucky net-browsers turned to Yabs, rightly expecting their weekly demi-chortle, they instead were horrified to read the news story you're reading this very moment.

"This makes no sense," said Denny Haynes, message board regular and fruit smoothie enthusiast. "Is this a joke?" "I thought Deadpool was dead," retorted Hot4Shulkie. "Is this a joke?"

"Back on **Agent X**? And Deadpool's coming back? Huh?" asked a confused Marvel.

"I can't tell if she's kidding," said Gail's Mom. "Is it a genuine news story couched as a joke, or a joke couched as a news story?" **Agent X** editor Marc Sumerak was heard to say nothing to nobody, thus non-confirming what we already failed to previously know beforehand. The creative team either returns with issue 13 of **Agent X**, or doesn't. Take that, Newsarama!

Networks *supposes we'll find out approximately four weeks after* ***Agent X*** *#12 ships how true this is. We can but hope. Of course, the likelihood was somewhat diminished by some of the other headlines following the story, a few of which* Networks *has included below:*

Jimmy Corrigan comes to Game Boy Advance – "Now *you* can know despair and self-loathing," says Nintendo.

Devil returns for Geoff John's soul – Writer of 12 monthlies pretends to not be home.

Internet comic, e-zine and website reviews

ANTARCTIC PRESS *www.antarctic-press.com*

Official site of the Texas-based publisher which has produced over 850 titles since its inception in 1984, including the likes of **Ninja High School**, **Neotopia** and **Killbox**. Sporting news, an online store, previews, downloads and the contact details of its biggest creators, there's a definite feel of thoroughness and clarity to this slick site. (CEB) **8**

DEVA COMICS *www.devacomics.com*

Dave West and Larry Bett's Deva Comics not only has two titles to its name (**More Than We Seem** and **Science Friction**) but it is also a founder member of the Accent UK small press collective. The creators' energy can be felt throughout this site, especially due to the fact they've put a lot of consideration into its offerings. There's background, behind-the-scenes info, latest developments, links and short stories. Like the publisher itself, this looks set to continue growing and doing well. (CEB) **7**

JINXWORLD *www.jinxworld.com*

Official site of one of comic's biggest and brightest new stars: Brian Michael Bendis. Considering he's the mastermind behind **Ultimate Spider-Man**, **Alias**, **Daredevil** and **Powers**, the news section leaves something to be desired. The interviews, messageboard and opportunity to buy original art are plus points however, and so is the option of contacting the writer directly, rather than being faced with an insulting feedback form. The main pitfall, as with so many creator sites, is lack of exclusive info, but this is still a definite welcome retreat for Bendis fans. (CEB) **7**

Review Panel: Chris Bunting (CEB), Tom McSween (TM) and Tim Pilcher (TP)

Rich Johnston's LYING IN THE GUTTER

continued from previous page...

stories running a gamut of styles, all intricately interwoven and using the framing device of an Edwardian music hall. Beneath its seeming stream-of-consciousness surface is a rock-solid structure."

"Although I have been working in comics and graphic novels for many years, this will be only the second non-genre, ie mainstream fiction, book I've done. The first one was **The Tale of One Bad Rat**, a graphic novel using a Beatrix Potter theme to explore the psychological after-effects of child sexual abuse. **Alice** is very different in style and content."

The Reason Why So Many Marvel Titles Are Now $2.99

Marvel executives have been cashing in, what with Marvel stock booming. A recent rundown of insider dealings show director James Halpin helping himself to twelve hundred thousand dollars after selling off share options; chief executive officer Allen Lipson trousering two and a quarter million; president Alan Fine getting around seven and a half million; officer Richard Ungar on three and a half million; director Mortan Handel on just over two million; director Sidney Gannis getting a gut-wrenchingly low three quarters of a million; director Lawrence Mittman pulling in just under two million and publisher Bill Jemas netting himself a very cool four and a half million or thereabouts.

This pales, of course, against the reputed 42 million dollars' worth of shares reported to be owned in AOL Time Warner by Paul Levitz.

Top Suit

Top Cow used to publish the works of Michael Turner. He recently left to form his own company, Aspen, creating the titles **Fathom**, **Ekos** and **Soulfire**. The company's anthology title, **Aspen** #1 was meant to ship a few weeks ago. The fact that it didn't was interpreted by many as the signs of another creator making brave promises and failing to live up to them.

Aspen, however, is the victim of something else. Posted to the Top Cow message board Frank Mastrumauro from Aspen wrote, "Bottom line, **Aspen** #1 was completed weeks ago. The entire print run of the issue was done and sent out to all the Diamond distributing centers last week. It was ready to come out one week early as we had announced."

"Needless to say, and as most people have found out, Diamond held the book from being shipped. Reason being, we are involved in a law suit with Top Cow right now (unfortunately) which is causing Diamond to hold our books until there is some type of resolution. How long this will last, we don't really know. All I can say is we are trying our best to ensure the comics we've worked hard to produce will come out as soon as possible.

"We will be having an official press release sent out and going up on our website for all to see and understand what has been going on." But Mastrumauro then ironically added, "As I'm sure you've surmised, the launch of our site has also been unfortunately delayed due to the law suit. However, we have continued to work as hard as possible to complete every book we've solicited in case things do get resolved soon and our books can begin to ship."

"All we want to do is make the best comics possible for you all, but we need to ensure we protect ourselves in order to do so."

The lawsuit is believed to concern the use of Michael Turner's character Fathom, who Top Cow published as well as other works. Top Cow are claiming partial ownership of licensing rights.

Reviews

Because few retailers allow titles to be read before purchase, ***Comics International****'s comprehensive reviews section enables comics readers to keep abreast of the wide range of titles currently being published and draw readers' attention to comics they might otherwise ignore. Naturally, this section is of even greater benefit to readers who rely solely on mail order, as they can only judge the quality of a title after purchase.*

Review codes: *Individual titles are judged against all similar comics past and present on a* ***1*** *to* ***10*** *basis, while a comparison is made against previous issues of the same title, ranging from <---> to <+++>. Hence, a quality comic may score an 8 against all others, but have slid from a previous issue's 9, denoted by <->. No change is marked <=>. We do not compare* ***Bone*** *with* ***X-Men****, but review each within their genre.*

Review panel: *Marco Antony (MA), Chris D. Bowen (CDB), Chris E. Bunting (CEB), (Mark Cox (MC), Jon Edwards (JE), Kelvin Green (KG), Stephen Hall (SH), David Knight (DK), Andrew Lewis (AL), Scott Montgomery (SM), Lee Nelson (LN), Rob Nott (RN), Leonie O'Moore (LO), Andy Smith (AS), Terence Stewart (TS), Mat Thomas (MT), Alex Thompson (MAT)*

CrossGen

The Crossovers 3

by Rodi & Mauricet + Vancata

<=> The Crossovers truly begin as one of Cliff's hidden aliens stumbles into his sister's sword and sorcery dimension, Calista the vampire slayer has to deal with the stuff of superheroics, and Corpescu targets the young alien collaborator. Writer Robert Rodi and artist Mauricet are producing something outstanding here. Add this to your monthly comics list! (CEB) 8

Crux 24

by Dixon & Epting + Paris

<=> Chuck Dixon and Steve Epting come in all guns blazing, as Terra Cognito lays claim to Earth in the interests of big business, with little concern for the native Atlanteans. As with most CrossGen titles, the inker (Roland Paris) and colourist (Frank D'Armata) deserve equal credit. Excellent escapism. (CEB) 7

Mystic 34

by Bedard & Lopresti + Ryan

<+> Giselle sets out to discover who set her up. Her first stop is at the Enchantress Guild but she soon gets caught up in a rather unusual domestic feud. Intrigue, action and great art are quickly becoming the hallmark of this comic. (CEB) 7

Negation 16

by Bedard & Pelletier + Meikis

<=> Kaine and Komptin form an uneasy alliance in their attempt to find a way off the prison planet Karakorum, but how does Gullit the dog fit into it? It's not only writer Tony Bedard who's destined for great things but penciller Paul Pelletier too. This creative team is producing a rip-roarin' rollercoaster of a read. (CEB) 7

Route 666 #10

by Bedard & Tocchini + Dell

<=> Cassandra has a special ability that allows her to see monsters disguised as humans for what they really are – so why would a group of clowns want to kidnap her? Writer Tony Bedard proves he's a boon to the CrossGen stable while guest penciller Greg Tocchini captures his script perfectly. Stylistically suspenseful and full of horrific humour! (CEB) 7

Ruse 19

by Beatty& Guice + Perkins

<=> The ungrateful citizens of Partington turn on Simon Archard, blaming him for the unfortunate devastation of their fair city at Lightbourne's hands and Scott Beatty takes the opportunity to introduce a pair of rival detectives who should act as interesting foils to our heroes. There's nothing quite so entertaining as a pair of stuck-up consulting detectives bitching at each other. (RN) 7

Scion 34

by Marz & Fern + Leisten

<+> Bron's planned marriage to Ylena begins to create tension throughout the Heron Dynasty and surely it will escalate even further when Ethan hears the news upon his return to Sanctuary Isle. Writer Ron Marz brings clarity and character to this setup issue, while Jim Fern adds more-than-acceptable guest pencils augmented by the inks and colours of Jay Leisten and Laura Villari respectively. (CEB) 6

Sigil 34

by Dixon & Fiorentino + Hillsman

<=> Sultan Ronolo runs but he cannot hide – not even in deep, uncharted space – from the holographic Roiya (a definite Red Dwarf riff). Another title tying into the sigil subplot, which will no doubt eventually lead to an intriguing crossover with the likes of Crux, Mystic, Meridian and Negation. (CEB) 6

Sojourn 21

by Marz & Ross + Keith

<-> Arwyn's quest takes her to the far off lands of fantasy Arabia, offering the possibility of exotic and lush eastern influenced visuals. Sadly though it's fill-in artist time again which means we lose Greg Land for a month. Having said that, Luke Ross turns out to be a pretty decent substitute at a pinch and the story doesn't suffer as a result. (RN) 7

Way of the Rat 12

by Dixon & Johnson + Ryder

<=> More kung-fu hi-jinks in CrossGen's answer to the Water Margin. Chuck Dixon has found a literary niche to which his writing style is very well suited. His familiar mix of action and easy-to-read storytelling captures the flavour of this faux-Chinese world. Colourful, exciting and possibly one of the few genuine 'feel good' comics around at the moment. (RN) 7

Dark Horse

Fort – Prophet of the Unexplained

by Lenkov & Irving

Charles Fort – investigator of the unexplained – goes on the trail of a string of bizarre murders and quickly gains an alien ally and a deadly ET enemy. Collecting issues 1 to 4, this is a Victorian *X Files* crossed with *Indiana Jones*. Writer Peter M. Lenkov is guilty of running on beyond the denouement, but the apt black and white art of Frazer Irving saves the day. Fort is not as complex and deep as it believes itself to be, nor particularly suspenseful, but it is an enjoyable romp overall. (CEB) 7

Ghost in the Shell 2: Man-Machine Interface 3

by Shirow

<=> More cyborgs in white panties for the pervy okatu crowd, as heroine Motoko and her robot assistants attempt to weed out the unwitting traitor in her company, finding genetically modified pigs at the source! This may sound outlandish, but like much sci-fi and cyberpunk, Masamune Shirow prophesises the future we find ourselves moving towards. Some may be turned off by the CGI background art, but it adds another dimension to Shirow's outwardly simplistic manga art. (MAT) 8

Hellboy: Weird Tales 2

by various

<+> With good writing and great art, every story in the second issue of this eight-part horror/fantasy anthology series hits the mark. Best of all is Eric Powell's funny interlude from Hellboy's childhood days, with the cute little tyke running around an Air Force base in military-issue clothes too big for him, with his dog in tow. The numerous contributors include Steve Parkhouse, Joe Casey and Seung Kim. (DK) 7

<=> Casey's amusing rocketeering tale begins the latest round of creators' takes on Mike Mignola's Hellboy, assisted by some Joe Kubert-esque art by Steve Parkhouse. Kim provides moody pencilled art for Randy Stradley as Hellboy finds himself in a spot of hot water, while Eric Wright and Eric Powell produce some more comical stints with pestering (dead) mothers and a mischievous Hellboy Junior. John Cassaday's continuing *Lobster Johnson* pastiche strip rounds off another fine issue. (MAT) 7

The Nevermen: Streets of Blood 3

by Amara & Davis

<-> Events are brought to an inevitable conclusion as the mystery men face the sinister Winterbone and his gang of weirdos. Although Guy Davis's art is as gorgeously eccentric as ever, and Phil Amara provides some amusingly odd villains for our heroes to face, the series gives the impression of having been cut in its prime. Perhaps this is a sign of bad pacing by Amara or due to the limitations of three issues for a series that is bursting with ideas. Either way, it leads to a disappointing finale after the promising opening. (MAT) 6

DC Comics

American Century 24

by Chaykin + Tischman & Severin; Vertigo

<+> Howard Chaykin and David Tischman delve into the history of the Block family, as Harry's great-grandfather Jakob gets involved with drugs, unscrupulous landowners, and hookers with hearts of gold-plating in mid-19th century Kansas. This being a cowboy tale it provides a damn fine excuse to have the wonderful John Severin on art duty, with his trademarked dirty loose crosshatch style well-suited to the exploits of the womanising Jakob. Although close to cancellation, there's still time to pick up on this series and – with Chaykin's art back on the cover – you have no excuse. (MAT) 7

Batman 614

by Loeb & Lee + Williams

<=> This issue lists all the reasons The Joker should not be allowed to live, while Batman subjects him to a savage and well-deserved issue-long beating that inevitably stops short of finishing the job. One gets the feeling Jeph Loeb would love this to have ended differently, but that was never on the cards, and would have been heralded by a massive build-up and maximum hype. (DK) 8

<-> Sometimes Batman is so old school that the story comes across as infuriating. Here we have Bats driven close to killing The Joker and being held back by those who are nearest and dearest to him. In the pages of The Authority the Joker would now be dead and stuffed as a wall mounted trophy, but Bats is made of more firm moral stuff apparently. The crisis of faith is well told, but still you can't help feel no one in Gotham would particularly object if Bats finished The Joker off once and for all. (RN) 6

Batman: Nevermore 2

by Wein & Davis

<=> The X-Men's forgotten luminary continues his *Elseworlds* series, as Edgar's investigations into the murders get him into more danger, with only a dark stranger to watch over him. Mixing the enigmatic Batman with aspects of Edgar Allan Poe's fiction may seem obvious and another example of the imprint's creative tardiness, but fortunately this is saved by Len Wein's solid scripting and Guy Davis's evocatively messy art, which

perfectly suits the period setting and ominous atmosphere. Not being packaged as an over-inflated hardcover probably helps also. (MAT) 7

Doom Patrol 20

by Arcudi & Geary

<+> The narrative flow of this title is disturbed by a fill-in issue, but it's a good one. Guest artist Rick Geary (incorrectly credited on the cover as Tan Eng Huat) gives a cartoony take on Thayer Jost's efforts to exploit the Doom Patrol brand in his TV serial. John Arcudi's script pokes fun at the media's tendency never to let the facts get in the way of a good story. (DK) 7

Global Frequency 7

by Ellis & Bisley; WildStorm

<+> There are 1001 operatives in the Global Frequency and on the evidence of the seven issues so far every single one of them is arrogant, opinionated, rude and a right pain in the arse. I'm therefore finding it increasingly difficult to have any sympathy for these characters and consequently I generally don't care what happens to them. Which is a shame because the basic structure of the series and many of the stories is good. Just for once could Warren Ellis please write a character who isn't a miserable, hard as nails antihero. I expect more from the man who created The Authority and Planetary. (RN) 6

<=> Simon Bisley does the job this time of illustrating another of Ellis's sci-fi disasters averted by the international collection of psychos, scientists and shotguns. Ellis tailors the script to suit Bisley's talents at depicting messy ultra-gore, as another group of terrorists attempts to blow holes in a national city, with normality kept in check by a determined Chinese police officer and a craggy Russian 'cleaner' with a large axe. Ellis's tight, fast-paced script and dialogue make for another mini cinematic thriller. (MAT) 8

Green Arrow 25

by Raab & Adlard

<=> The excellent run on Green Arrow to date is punctuated by a dreadful crossover series with Green Lantern. I can see the point of this – exploring Ollie's animosity towards the new Green Lantern who uses Hal's nom de plume, and in a sense it acts as a mirror sequel to the classic hard travelling heroes story of the late Sixties, but the plot itself is terminally dull, dealing with bland bleach drinking aliens. A wasted opportunity to pay homage to a classic partnership of the past. (RN) 4

Harley Quinn 32

by Lieberman & Yeowell

<+> Monsieur, with Steve Yeowell as guest artist, you are really spoiling us. After the drawn-out revenge plot that preceded it, this is not a bad episode; and all the better for being largely self-contained. Harley goes to a restaurant with Detective Bishop, and The Joker gets jealous. Lieberman simply can't resist the explosions, but there's good dialogue, and Harley's well-observed tendency toward capricious violence is both frightening and fascinating. (DK) 6

Hellblazer 183

by Carey & Bermejo; Vertigo

<=> Mike Carey adds a few drops of Celtic mythology into the Constantine mix in the second part of *Black Flowers*. The Gironnved – shepherds of the dead – are effectively menacing and the story's resolution points to further horrors to come. Lee Bermejo's shadowy visuals and jaunty angles add to the oppressive mood helping to ensure that Hellblazer is once again a must-read title. (AL) 8

Human Defense Corps 1

by Templeton & Sauve Jr + Vlasco

The premise is logical enough: wave after wave of alien invaders have demonstrated the need for a specialist armed service to deal with extraordinary threats. After all, Superman and the JLA can't be everywhere at once. On its first mission to a fictitious country unimaginatively named Bulgravia, the Corps get their butts handed to them by some nasty critters that turn out not to be Durlans after all. (DK) 6

The Authority 1

by Morrison & Turner + Regla; WildStorm

To readers of 2000 AD *Nikolai Dante* writer Robbie Morrison needs no introduction. Having tested the water with a one-shot last year, Morrison is now installed as regular scribe on the new-new Authority. The opening section harkens back to Warren Ellis's original *Kaizen Gamorra* storyline, then it's out with the old and in with the new as the team topically confronts terrorist suicide bombers. With the shameful way the previous series was censored when real life got too uncomfortable for the US publishers we can only hope this time around the truth will not be repressed. (AL) 7

By pitching the team into battle with virtually the same bunch of villains as Ellis did in the first volume's opener, one cannot help but subconsciously compare the two. Dwayne Turner provides some horribly sloppy visuals, and Morrison takes a while to remember what this book is supposed to be about. (LN) 4

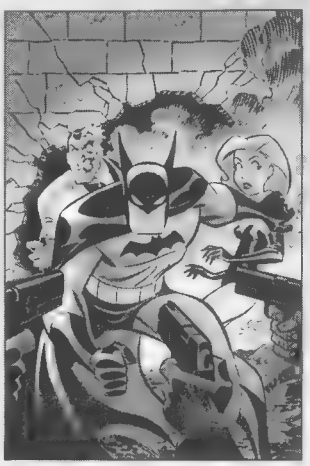
A relaunch for the superhero series that DC bosses love to hate (allegedly). Sadly, the old Ellis/Millar magic has proved difficult to emulate. What we have here is an average superhero book sitting in the lap of its past reputation. Judging a new series on a single issue is always risky, but that said, issue two needs to show more originality and style if it's going to impress readers of the previous series. (RN) 6

What happened to Robbie Morrison? One of the best Brit writers to come out of 2000 AD in the last five years falls flat on his face with this foul-mouthed relaunch, which lacks all of the charm, character and flow of previous teams' efforts. The characters are two-dimensional, the plot is confusing despite wads of exposition, and the art is the worst type of soulless ill-defined superhero. No class. (MT) 2

JLA 80

by Kelley & Rouleau & Sowd

<+++> The best issue in at least three years. Wonder Woman is on a non-date with Batman, who in romance turns out to be a mouse not a man. Alfred camps it up more than Jarvis in The Ultimates, and the Martian Manhunter seeks help from a sultry villainess (literally playing with fire). The main plot, however, concerns the JLA's attempts to mediate in a Waco-style seige. Brilliant. (DK) 9



Batman Adventures 1

by Templeton & Burchett + Beatty

The Penguin is elected mayor and declares Batman an outlaw. His vandalism of the bat signal creates a good sight gag (the umbrella signal) plus there's an in-joke about Arkham's security system, and good characterisation of its inmates. The plotting and wry humour of this first issue equals that of the main Batman continuity titles. Although comedy is used freely, it doesn't swamp the action, danger and mystery elements. (DK) 9

DC tries another new title based on the critically acclaimed cartoon series of their famous Batboy. Things are much the same; artwise it's all slightly angular stylised designs, with an accessible and self-contained plot making this well suited as a giveaway. The fun but flimsy plot finds Bats dealing with a mysterious break-in at the notorious Arkham Asylum: as the mental inmates bicker and fight amongst themselves Batman exerts his authority over the city. (MAT) 6

JSA: All Stars 1

by Goyer + Johns & Velluto

Not much cop and excruciatingly under-written. Considering it involved two writers, what do Geoff Johns and David Goyer do? Meet for lunch and write this stuff on the back of a napkin? "And then they, like, fight, OK, and it'll be really rocking, but... oh, don't forget to give Hawkgirl a smart one-liner, will you? Kewl!" In this setup issue for a mini showcasing other writers and artists, the JSA is attacked by the Injustice Society, working for (you'll love this) a demon called Legacy! We all know the JSA theme is legacy, so how piss poor and contrived is that? I got the impression the next six issues are going to revolve around JSA members getting in touch with their feelings, and, if we're really lucky, they'll all have a lovely group hug for a finale. The art is merely pedestrian. (TS) 3

League of Extraordinary Gentlemen 4

by Moore & O'Neill; ABC

<+> Allan Quatermain and Mina Murray's woodland nookie gets interrupted with brilliantly comic timing by Dr Moreau's creations, depicted by Alan Moore as the surreal (mal-)forms of childhood picture book animals. Meanwhile Hyde deals some justly deserved punishment upon the treacherous Invisible Man, as the Martians' tripods descend on the Thames. Moore's wicked sense of humour and skill at writing this mix of black comedy and irreverent violence is captured by Kevin O'Neill's quirky crosshatching and doodling linework. Simply smashing, old boy! (MAT) 9

Lucifer 37

by Carey & Gross + Kelly & Ormston; Vertigo

<=> 37 issues on and this is still the DC series I enjoy the most. Lucifer is one of the few comics where the plot twists and turns don't disappoint; where you can actually expect (and get) a decent conclusion, and where it's not obvious what's going to happen in a few month's time. I get the same pleasure out of reading this comic as I do watching *Buffy*. And that's a compliment by the way. (RN) 8

100 Bullets 44

by Azzarello + Risso; Vertigo

<=> *Chill In The Oven* continues as mad dog killer Lono makes his presence in the joint felt, particularly to the unfortunate Loop Hughes. Vicious fight scenes never make you cringe as much as when all concerned are naked in a shower block, and the well-paced story is a straight up blend of *Boyz In The Hood* and *Escape From Alcatraz*, all stylishly rendered in Risso's Latino noir style. Exceptional. (MT) 9

100% #5

by Pope; Vertigo

<+> Paul Pope brings his latest Vertigo series to an end, as the interconnected lives of those working at the strip club reach turning points after the violent conclusion of Haitous's boxing match. Pope uses his expressive and stylishly loose flowing brush lines to brilliantly evoke the urban decay of the near future, but goes for greater storytelling than his usual manga-influenced

pace, creating a heart-warming and life-affirming tale. (MAT) 8

Stormwatch: Team Achilles 11

by Wright & Smith + Sienkiewicz; WildStorm

<+> Whilce Portacio's scratchy art is replaced as new penciller C.P. Smith jumps on board, assisted by Bill Sienkiewicz's excellent inks which, although slightly eccentric, reflect the dark mood of Micah Wright's scripts much more stylishly. Plot-wise the title is renewed with the UN team's celebrations cut short as they have to deal with a superhuman group attempting to rob the Federal Reserve of its gold. Lots of special-ops high-tech action and macho dialogue ensues, plus a guest appearance of an old Stormwatch fave. (MAT) 7

Superman: Red Son 1

by Millar & Johnson + Robinson

The long-in-the works saga of a Superman landing in the USSR rather than the USA finally arrives, with an exhilarating script by Mark Millar and beautiful artwork by Dave Johnson and Andrew Robinson. Millar puts a smart and respectful spin on the familiar Superman characters, with the hero initially appearing to have exactly the same ideals as the "real" Supes, until he decides to lead the Russian people himself at the end of the issue. One of if not the best Elseworlds stories by far. (SH) 9

Sweatshop 1

by Bagge + DeStefano + Wray

Peter Bagge turns his satirical eye from Gen X slackers and alternate Peter Parkers to the soul-destroying lives of strip cartoonists. Mel Bowling, 'creator' of Freddy Ferret, gets nominated for a cartooning prize, dumping all his insecurities on his underpaid, undervalued workers and using any means possible to win the award. Bagge's brilliantly cynical script and neurotically exaggerated art with more grimaces than a Rob Liefeld book is as biting as ever. Maybe he's had too much first-hand experience... (MAT) 7

Vertigo Pop: Bangkok 1

by Vankin & Camuncoli + Martinbrough; Vertigo

The third in Vertigo's Pop Culture stories, Bangkok begins with two Americans holidaying in Thailand to patch up their relationship problems. He's an unfaithful out of work actor and she's the worst kind of girlfriend – the sort of vegan eco-activist who won't have sex with you if you eat a hamburger. This being Bangkok they soon become embroiled in the gangster-run skin clubs that support the economy. Not as good as Alex Garland's *The Beach* but it's well worth picking up nevertheless. (RN) 7

War Story: Archangel

by Ennis & Erskine; Vertigo

A WWII pilot finds himself reassigned to what is effectively a suicide mission in the last of Garth Ennis's one-off War Stories. Shot through with the kind of dark humour and knowing irony Ennis's readers relish, this is an engaging and rewarding read. The character of Bob Oxblood is a magnificent creation, a man whose motivational technique consists of marvelling over the mission's flaws as if they were perks of the job. The final sequence – the mission itself – is breathtaking. (AL) 8

Image

Masters of the Universe Volume 2 #2

by Staples & various; MVCreations

<=> Although the art attempts to steal the show yet again, what with a sure-to-be classic J.J. Kirby cover and sensational sequentials by Emiliano Santalucia, writer Val Staples is more than a match. His ability is improving by the issue: besides playing far more to Santalucia's strengths by including a heated battle, as the Masters defend Grayskull from their enemies, Staples also raises the emotional stakes as one hero makes the ultimate sacrifice. (CEB) 8

Micronauts 7

by Jolley & Caselli + Schulz + Brown

<=> There's a lot of plot to develop, so don't expect many fireworks. New character Commander Sethis is introduced. Ryan Archer dons the raiment of Space Glider. Biotron yields up the infant to the Time Travelers; and the fugitives seem to have found Chicago under a lunar dome. This makes some kind of sense in the frame of reference provided by preceding issues, and the artwork is consistently good. (DK) 6

Micronauts: Karza 3

by Krueger & Kurth + Snyder

<=> Set up by the Time Traveler, Archer is stranded in the past feeling like a hapless idiot for not stopping Karza when he had the chance. Not having given up all hope, he persuades a Pharoid Priest to help him put things right. While confusing and hardly enthralling, this issue at least shows Karza altering his body with nanotech beneath his characteristic armour; and he shoots his hands like missiles. (DK) 6

Rex Mundi 3

by Nelson & Johnson

<=> Arvid Nelson widens the scope of his conspiracy story set in an Inquisitorial Paris of the 1920s, as the French leadership make plans for imperialistic expansion leaving Dr Julien at the centre of a perfidious power struggle. With Eric Johnson's tight and detailed pages, it's hard to believe that this is his first published work, although he is helped by Jeremy Cox's excellent computer colouring. With Image's flood of new titles, it's good to see a group of creators channel their energies into a genuinely original concept. (MAT) 8

Savage Dragon 107

by Larsen

<++> A flip-book with a complete Major Damage origin story on the reverse, this issue showcases new Image heroes Firebreather, Invincible and Major Damage as guest stars fighting Humungous, the living stone Tiki monster. A truncated plot concerns the President's efforts to persuade Dragon to intervene against the Gods in their floating city on the grounds that they may have 'weapons of mass destruction'! Their exchange of views is priceless. (DK) 7

Tomb Raider 30

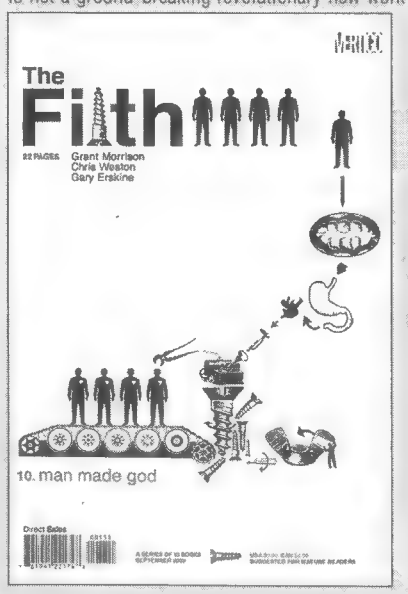
by Ney Rieber & Daniel + Sibal; Top Cow

<=> In a dynamic double-sized issue, Lara Croft battles her arch-foe Vymes. I loved new penciller Tony Daniel's early indie work; however he has since swapped his clean, John Byrne-esque style for the tired, over-rendered Image approach – a decision that has adversely affected Danial's draughtsmanship. Meanwhile, John Ney Rieber – like previous writer Dan Jurgens and the forthcoming movie sequel – makes the predictable error of giving Lara a love interest. (JE) 5

The Filth 10

by Morrison & Weston + Erskine; Vertigo

<-> More stream of consciousness nonsense. The Filth sells on the back of Grant Morrison's deserved reputation as an excellent writer. This, however, is derivative (of his own past work), incomprehensible, and a classic case of style over substance. The Filth is not a ground-breaking revolutionary new work that extends the boundaries of conventional panel-based narrative, it is in fact just a very silly little boy who's behaving badly and should be sent to bed without any supper. (RN) 5



<=> After the eagerly expected build-up to the truth behind the Hand and Greg Feely's delusions, Morrison perversely throws his tale off at a tangent as the clean-up crew is sent to deal with a rogue para-personality set on creating a cult of man-made superheroes. This being Morrison, he takes things literally with said hero having visible thought balloons, but disturbs the norm by him having a penile rash and a series of psychoses, all lovingly rendered by Chris Weston's fine linework. Which leaves me questioning Morrison's state of mind, let alone his characters'. (MAT) 7

Marvel

Amazing Spider-Man 52

by Straczynski & Romita Jr + Hanna

<+> Spidey goes up against Dig, the Frankensteinian gamma zombie and faces a moral dilemma over whether to accept money to protect a frightened gangster. This issue reflects how brilliant the synergy between Straczynski and Romita Jr can be, with art that is equal parts high action and comedy and scripts with wise-guy dialogue that creates laugh-out-loud yet incisive moments. All of which allows you to overlook the fairly daft storyline and villain. (MAT) 7

The Avengers 66

by Johns & Coipel + Lanning

<+> A Government conspiracy theory, hope there's a catch at the end. Red Zone escalates, as do tempers and hysteria. Geoff Johns measures the tension with perfectly tendered personal moments (ie. Iron Man and Panther). Olivier Coipel adapts an unusual artistic attitude but one to watch definitely. (CDB) 5

<+> The Avengers brave the poisonous chemical cloud surrounding Mount Rushmore, causing tempers to flare between the team and federal agents. Johns' injection of realism creates heightened tension, by highlighting the grey morals of Black Panther and the surprise source of the attack. Coipel's art is reproduced better, showing off his new costume designs and fine artwork for this usually more traditional team book. A welcome and renewed creative vigour for this iconic group. (MAT) 7

Captain America 12

by Rieber & Austen + Lee + Villarrubia

<=> John Ney Rieber and Chuck Austen push this title into the darkest territory in its history as they recount a tale from the past, which deals with experiments on Atlanteans, an uncompromising Prince Namor and a frozen Cap. Jae Lee is the ideal artist for such a direction and helps give this title a new depth and level of sophistication. Gritty and ambiguous – this is a Captain America you've never seen or expected to see. (CEB) 8

Captain Marvel 8

by David & Hotz + Sotomayor

<=> Marv walks the tightrope between sanity and insanity while dealing with the fine line between gods (in this case thunder gods) and man. Kyle Hotz's cartoon-like pencils are surprisingly in keeping for a Peter David tale that incorporates some darker themes along with his trademark humour. Despite ChrisCross's exit, this title is still the biggest brick in the House of Ideas. (CEB) 9

Daredevil 46

by Bendis & Maleev; Marvel Knights

<=> Brian Michael Bendis brings back my favourite DD villain – Typhoid Mary – and, under the tender pencil strokes of Alex Maleev, she's looking better and crazier than ever. In BMB we trust, because at the moment he is the goose who's laying the golden eggs for Marvel. Daredevil has never been better, with its blend of enticing soap opera, gritty gangster realism and 'less is more' superheroics. BMB is shaping up to be the

American Alan Moore. (RN) 8

<+> The returned and rather angry Kingpin unleashes the madness of Typhoid Mary to enact revenge on DD for his part in his downfall, just as Matt gets some light in his life from a new flame. Bendis rubs your face in the violence of the vengeful crime boss and the disturbed nature of the resurfaced assassin, while still brilliantly portraying the more personal moments of his tortured hero. If Michael Gaydos doesn't inspire a whole new generation of artists with his noirish photo-captured art, I'll be much surprised. (MAT) 8

Domino 1

by Pruett & Stelfreeze

Joe Pruett kills off a solid action-packed spy adventure for the cocky mercenary and lady luck, as Domino returns to solo adventuring and searches for her lost mother. Brian Stelfreeze creates some clear-lined widescreen panels, comparable – if not directly lifted from – the best anime action flicks. With such a cinematic dimension, neat combat sequences and natural dialogue, the series more than makes up for her previous outings and Rob Liefeld origins. (MAT) 7

Fantastic Four 68

by Waid & Weiringo + Kesel

<=> Doom seeks to exact revenge on the team through Valeria. Yay, Doom is back! D'ohhh, what's with the makeover? Don't get me wrong, I am loving with a capital L the Mark Waid and Mike Weiringo FF, but while the chemistry is right and the approach refreshing, the costume change is unnecessary and unwelcome. You will not better Jack Kirby's original design. But hey, small criticism for the best FF run since Alan Davis kicked off the relaunch. (CDB) 6

<=> Unthinkable kicks off as the Doctor makes a special house-call to the youngest in the FF clan, Valeria. Even Johnny and Reed's intended prank on Ben soon turns to doom as Franklin also comes under threat. Waid and Wieringo are turning this title into the very theme they're exploring here: magic. (CEB)8

Incredible Hulk 54

by Jones & Deodato Jr

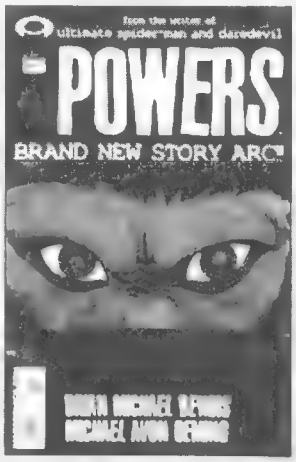
The racy Bruce Jones revolution has come full circle as his convoluted conspiracy plot resolves itself in as ugly and garish a slugfest as you've ever seen, with the Hulk and his fellow emerald behemoth the Abomination knocking seven bells out of each other. After beginning with such promise in collaboration with John Romita Jr and Tom Palmer, the downward spiral in the quality of artists has weakened this title, and Jones himself has finally blown a gasket. Only the extraordinary quality of Kaare Andrews' covers remains consistent. (MA) 6

<=> The *Banner on the run* storyline has been going on far too long. What was a strong new direction for the series is now feeling overly familiar. Hardly an issue goes by without yet another set of double and triple crosses to the point where every new face is assumed to be a sleeper agent of some kind, probably working for three different organisations at the same time. Jones needs to wind this storyline up urgently and move on to pastures new. (RN) 6

<+> Hulk finally gets round to having a scrap with the Abomination, as the angry twosome fight over the abused Nadia, while the mysterious organisation discover the traitor in its midst. Mike Deodato Jr purges all bad memories of his mid-Nineties flash-line and grimace-bursting pages with some shadowy, more realistic artwork. Though his portrayal of the muscle-bound fight is worth the price of admission, how Jones can justify the snail-pace four-issue build-up is beyond me. (MAT) 7

Powers 31

by Bendis & Oeming



This extraordinary departure takes us into Kubrick territory, to 'The Dawn of Man', where two alpha males jostle for sexual hegemony and manifest some heat-vision-ray-beam-type powers. Rightly celebrated for his tremendous dialogue, pitched some-where between David Mamet and Don DeLillo, 30 pages of "gruunk", "hugh" and "gaah" isn't really what we want from Bendis, but it is brilliantly drawn by Michael Avon Oeming; kinetic like Kirby, with the brisk ruggedness of Mike McMahon. Bendis likes to hype up his storylines but while his scripting always hits the bullseye, his stories tend not to punch their weight. (MA) 8

<=> What can a jaded 'seen it all before' reviewer say about 29 pages of dialogue-less monkey sex? BMB's new direction for the title begins at the dawn of history with the first evidence of super powers amongst our simian ancestors. An interesting concept, somewhat obscured by page after page of rear entry monkey action. Still, nothing you wouldn't see on a David Attenborough show on BBC2. (RN) 7

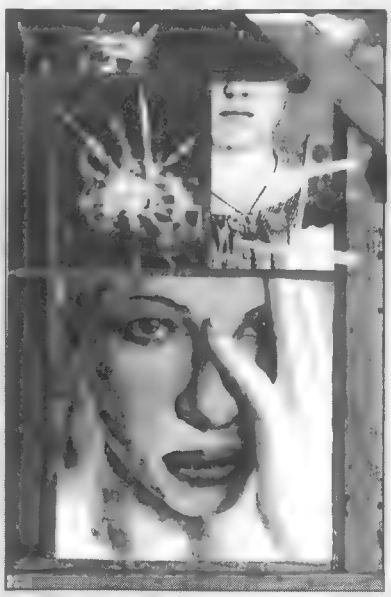
<--> An entire issue about the origin of powers in prehistoric anatomically-correct monkeys manages to be more engaging than any three random Marvel/DC comics put together. There's love (and lovin'), danger, fighting, prehistoric domino masks and more, everything you could want except actual words, really. The art is as usual of a very high standard, making for a very enjoyable, if quick, read. (MT) 7

<=> Bendis goes all *2001* on our arses as he starts to relate the mysteries of the Powers universe. With monkeys. Shagging. And shooting laser beams from their eyes. Bendis claims that this all fits into his great plan; we'll see. Maybe more disturbingly Oeming revels in portraying said monkeys' misadventures. Perhaps this is the ultimate expression of creators with too much time in their hands. Or it's just a great opening to another Bendis epic. (MAT) 7

Marvel Universe: The End 4

by Starlin + Milgrom

<=> Thanos betrays the cosmic heroes that he convinced to help him save the universe, and seizes the cosmic pharaoh's power for himself (well, I didn't see THAT coming), becoming a god in the process. Again. If Starlin is to be believed there are more different types of god-enabling Ultimate Powers lying around the Marvel Universe than there are capes, and yet it's the same two or three characters who always find and then lose them, merely by posing like a male fashion model and talking in exceptionally unwieldy rhetoric-saturated dialogue. File under comedy. (MT) 2



Alias 22

by Bendis & Gaydos; MAX Comics

Revisionist historian Brian Michael Bendis takes a skewed squint at key moments in classic Marvel continuity, and finds his girl, Jessica Jones, lurking in the shadows. His dialogue is pitch-perfect and his silent moments are equally eloquent and compelling. And he has some pretty cool ideas about what teenage girls do in their solitary bedroom moments (masturbate). Michale Gaydos raises his game with his best art job to date – his grunged-up take on Steve Ditko is cute as a button. (MA) 9

<--> Part one of the Jessica Jones origin story, drawn in a Ditko style, with passing nods at conventional Marvel history. We see our heroine as a sexually frustrated teenage geek and the circumstances that led to her gaining powers. It's okay, but I guess the meat and bones of the story comes next issue. A slight dip in quality, but nothing to worry about. (RN) 6

<+> Bendis delves into Jessica's past revealing her surprising school sweetheart and the tragic accident that gave her powers, showing once again life just around the corner of Marveldom's key events. Stylistically, Gaydos employs a naive simpler line and flatter colours for this flashback. While Bendis shows that he's just as capable at capturing awkward teenage girls as women; are we sure this guy ain't really a woman? (MAT) 8

New X-Men 140

by Morrison & Jimenez + Lanning

<+> *Murder At The Mansion* continues as Bishop and Sage pop over from the trendily titled Extreme X-Men to investigate the apparent murder of Emma Frost. Grant Morrison manages to feature a plethora of characters without it turning into a long list of superhero names and powers, and Phil Jiminez's clean pencils are very easy on the eye, even if he does lack the superb layouts of the much-missed Frank Quitely. A real page-turner. (MT) 8

<=> Morrison sends his characters on a game of Cluedo but upsets expectations of the culprit and continues to mock the norms of X-titles with his comical rather than anguished students. Jimenez's art is obviously a disappointment after Quitely's stylish reinterpretation for the title, but his clean lines settle in well. (MAT) 8

Paradise X 10

by Krueger & Braithwaite + Reinhold

<--> This weary saga drags on. So little seems to be happening you could easily skip this month without missing any important plot points, in marked contrast to the previous issue. Some proof reading wouldn't have gone amiss either, to avoid such errors as 'Foggy Nelson poured over dossier after dossier'. Shoddy as well as boring. (DK) 4

Rawhide Kid 5

by Zimmerman & Severin; MAX Comics

<+> The too-clever-by-half camp western comes good in the final episode, although the Explicit Content banner on the cover still seems unwarranted; the threat the outlaws pose to the town's 'whores' notwithstanding. Light comedy in the vein of *Are You Being Served?* still just about passes for family entertainment, as far as I'm aware. (DK) 7

<=> The Kid and the Sheriff go down in a blaze of glory in the showdown with the gangsters Cisco Pike and his clichéd mercenary helpers. The Sheriff finally manages to save face with his annoying son, leaving the Kid to ride off into the distance. This fun series hardly deserved the moral outrage that surrounded it, Ron Zimmerman may play up Rawhide for laughs, but veteran John Severin is obviously in on the act, creating his great roughly crosshatched art. More controversial is J. Scott Campbell's contorted cover art that makes the Kid look more like Woody from *Toy Story*. (MAT) 6

Soldier X 10

by Bollers & Ranson

<=> Nathan searches for the leader of the supremacists behind the terrorists' attacks, with fate on his side. Karl Bollers does a nice job continuing the 'mutant tackling real world issues' that has made this title stand out from the crowd, but drops the comical turns used in Darko Macan's run. Arthur Ranson's subtly realistic art fits the themes of the new direction for this once clichéd '90s mutant, making me wish he had headed this comic since the start of its underrated run. (MAT) 8

Uncanny X-Men 422

by Austen & Garney + Morales

<+> Alpha Flight arrives to take away Xavier's

pupils under the pretence of negligence, while Lorna shows further signs of instability. Ron Garney's all-American art style is just the ticket for an X-book. Crisp, clear, fluid. Chuck Austen leaves subtlety at the door and goes straight for the throat. Traditional but true. Sleeper hit written all over it. (CDB) 7

Wolverine: Xisle 5

by Jones & Lucas

<=> Well I'm confused. Apparently the whole thing was a mind game played on Logan by..... Logan. But, he killed a circus freak. Or did he? Who know? But the art was super cool. Why are we not seeing Jorge Lucas (so, no lightsabers) on a mainstream Marvel monthly? Cap. America? Punisher? Definitely Iron Man. Wasted talent, Marvel? (CDB) 8

Wolverine/Doop: The Pink Mink 1

by Milligan & Cooke + Bone

Logan and big green bogey Doop team up to solve the mystery behind a stolen pink fur and its hallucinatory effects on mutants. Darwyn Cooke joins Pete Milligan again for this groovy X-Statix mini. Cooke manages to get a besuited Wolvie looking trendy, while Pete Milligan similarly plays around with the characters and the readers. Meanwhile, Doop's letters page manages to drag out more angry old X-Force fans; who are these people? (MAT) 7

X-Men Unlimited 46

by various

<+> Simon Bisley flexes his artistic muscle again this month for another Wolvie-packed issue of the X-Anthology. Bisley and Ian Edgington have Logan getting involved in a mutant fighting pit dealing with the usual lowlives and teaching the owners why he's the best there is. Meanwhile Bruce Jones shows he's able to tell a 16-page action story, as the pointy-haired one uncovers a disturbingly familiar feral monster in a secret bunker. Shin Nagasawa's manga-styled art is surprisingly adept at illustrating this short story, with David Finch's attractively muscular art providing a cover. Unfortunately this doesn't stop the self-contained stories being rather inconsequential. (MAT) 6

X-Statix 10

by Milligan & Bond

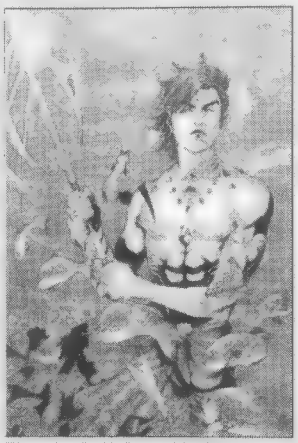
<=> Philip Bond acts as fill-in artist as Pete Milligan delves into the untold secrets of the diaries of Edie Sawyer (aka U-Go Girl). Bond's clear and chunkily hip art lends itself well to the cynically comical exploits of the celebrity mutants. If Mike Allred needs another rest, Bond's work would be well appreciated. Milligan charts Edie's rise from confused teen mother through Hollywood to star at the centre of generation Big Brother's media attention. (MAT) 8

US Indies

Boneyard 10

by Moore; NBM Publishing

<+> Paris is skinny-dipping with Abbey by moonlight but only in his dreams. The poor guy then wakes up to find Glump has added insult to injury. Richard Moore plots gently, ratchetting up the friction between Abbey and interloper Roxanne Hall, and weaving in the sabotage of the Swimsuit Issue and the reaction to it, before the story's denouement reveals a seriously threatening villain. (DK) 7



Namor 1

by Jemas + Watson & Larroca+ Miki

I think The Sub-Mariner is a cooler title, but this latest series for the moody maritime monarch looks promising, certainly more so than DC's recent Aquaman relaunch. This issue, lavishly illustrated by Salvador Larroca and Danny Miki, focuses on Namor's childhood. Sadly, despite him being a prince, Namor's parents could not afford to buy him any trunks, although the artists do manage to spare his blushes, of course! (SH) 7

Well, the art's quite pretty. Almost the entire first half of this first issue shows a 10-year old Namor playing with a human girl on a beach, painstakingly illustrating the difference between surface dwellers and Atlanteans. The other half shows him being cocky as a teenager. Imagine that. And then a shark eats his cousin. This is what happens when the boss decides that he wants to write a comic, but in all fairness it's definitely worth 25c. (MT) 2

Marvel kicks off a new series exploring its Golden Age hero's origins with some brilliant results. Any concerns surrounding Larroca's artistic shuffling are forgotten, as he produces his usual excellent standard of work, with a beautifully clear and bright imagining of the Atlantean world. Andi Watson is brilliantly suited to set up the innocent character of the mischievous young Sub-Mariner, for Bill Jemas's Hollywood-friendly adaptation of this classic character. (MAT) 7

Gloom Cookie 15

by Valentino & Burns; Slave Labor

After months of waiting for this issue, patient readers are rewarded with a big, delicious helping of melodrama. Breehn John Burns's economical art is superb as always, and Serena Valentino has written a tightly plotted story, albeit littered with trite dialogue. It's great to see something happen at last. (DK) 7

Liberty Meadows 31

by Cho

<=> The long cold Winter storyline continues (although we're into Summer almost). Frank is saved, but does Brandy get any thanks? Can't think of a single complaint about this book. It is consistently entertaining, reliably funny, oh and yeah, it only comes out every two months! I need my monthly Monkey Boy! (CDB) 8

Priest 1

by various; TokyoPop $9.99

An adaptation of Min-Woo Hyung's dark horror tale which cleverly incorporates both the manga and action genres. There's a distinct feel of *From Dusk Till Dawn* as a group of bandits are attacked by supernatural zombies, only to be saved by a reborn – although equally unholy – priest. Its high production values (with the external appearance of a novel) sum up this entire work: intriguing. (CEB) 7

Shrimpy and Paul and Friends

by Bell; Highwater Books; $16.95

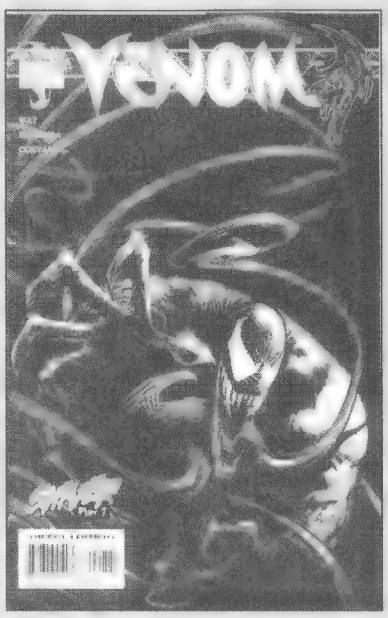
When Paul asks Shrimpy 'are you on acid?' the insinuation is that in order to partake fully in this collection you require such additional substances. Without them what do you have? The bizarre 'adventures' of oddball characters in which creator Marc Bell displays little regard for reality but which are disturbingly absorbing nonetheless. Forget Alternative Comics and Fantagraphics Books, if there was an award for Strangest Comic Book, Highwater Books would win it hands down for this. (CEB) 6

Venom 1

by Way & Herrera + Cuevas

The dodgy concept of an ongoing title for the gooey Spider-Man villain is unexpectedly turned into a tale of scary goings-on at an Arctic outpost. Unfortunately, Daniel Way's script is a shameless rip-off of The Thing (the movie, not Ben Grimm) and the artwork by Francisco Herrera and Carlos Cuevas is simply horrible. (SH) 4

A young army private discovers a scene of death and destruction at an Antarctic military installation. Yep, it's the old *Thing from Another World* chestnut. Thankfully, Way provides us with a fallible central character to keep up some interest. One has to wonder why a book aimed at a younger target audience would neglect to include the title character and cover star in the book. (LN) 5



The Speed Abater

by Blain & Johnson;
NBM Publishing; $13.95

Part of NBM's ComicsLit imprint, this is a translation of Christophe Blain's award-winning work. George and Lou go in search of adventure by joining the navy but are struck by severe seasickness and soon their entire warship is threatened as a result. Colour plays as vital a part as the writing and pencils and it pays off, resulting in a truly provocative piece of work. (CEB) 8

Canadian titles

Transformers Armada 11

by Furman
& Guidi + To; DreamWave

<+> Megatron gets a right kicking as the assault on the Minicon moon base concludes. Simon Furman has rescued this title, downplaying the cheesy kids' TV elements and producing a story which is good in its own right. The art team does a much better job here than the Generation One team does, and James Raiz's covers are splendid. (KG) 8

Transformers: The War Within 6

by Furman
& Figueroa + To; DreamWave

<=> Simon Furman brings his tale of the pre-history of the Transformer saga to a titanic close, as the newly elected Optimus Prime faces off against Megatron in the bowels of their planet Cybertron. Furman plays along with the themes of the mini-series' title, but includes plenty of bot-on-bot fighting scenes for Don Figueroa to draw. The artist's chunky work, alongside the studio's excellent colouring team with direct-coloured backgrounds and inked robots, brilliantly captures the redesigned druids, making for a satisfying nostalgia fest. (MAT) 7

Waiting For Food 3

by Oog & Blik/Robert Crumb;
Drawn & Quarterly

A beautifully produced hardcover collection of placemat drawings by the king of alternative comics, Robert Crumb. Possibly more contemplative in nature than Crumb's usual work, these range from poignant insights of everyday life to the plain surreal. Most striking of all is that it's evident just how much Crumb has influenced the new wave of alternative comix stars. A must for every Robert Crumb fan. (CEB) 7

UK newsstand

Action Man 92

by various; Panini Comics

Action Man travels to an island to search out his arch-enemy, Dr X. With X running a ninja training school and Action Man in his samurai gear and ready to rumble, it's not

long until the fireworks begin. A punchy plot by Rob Jones is given extra kick by the energised art of John Ross and Martin Griffiths. With free gifts, puzzles and a poster, join the mission. (CEB) 7

Avengers United 27

by various; Panini Comics

<+> Count Nefaria gives the Avengers and the Thunderbolts a thrashing in the first two segments, while the plot of the Infinites is revealed in the third slot. Avengers Infinity has gone right off the rails plot-wise, and not in a good way, while the other story is rather unexciting, despite the high stakes involved. Mark Bagley's shoddy art on the Thunderbolts segment doesn't help things. (KG) 6

Commando 3622 "Artic Killer"

by unknown; DC Thomson

<=>This edgy Cold War thriller bears more than a passing resemblance to Craig Thomas's Firefox novels. There's much snow and subterfuge, and an entertaining mystery surrounding an experimental Soviet aircraft. It's a pity that DC Thomson still do not allow creator credits on these comics (why?). The art looks like that of the great John Ridgway. (SM) 7

Inferno 36

by various; Black Library

<+> This handsome edition of the fantasy anthology is devoted to Gotrek & Felix, two of Games Workshop's most popular characters. *Redhand's Daughter* is a brand new novella, accompanied by a darkly humorous comic strip featuring the doom-seeking dwarf and his faithful chronicler. And there's a rare interview with their creator, author William King. A special treat for fans. (SM) 8

Judge Dredd The Megazine 206

by various; Rebellion

<-> Dredd kills fellow judges for the greater good of his city. Young Middenface is a likeable enough strip. Devlin Waugh has nice visuals but no plot; but anything is better than Family. Even Black Siddha evokes a sense of appalled fascination. A short story by Dave Bishop fills the quota of text pages. It's the reprints that shine, as ever. (DK) 6

2000 AD #1337-1340

by various; Rebellion

<=> Judge Dredd shows the only acceptable conclusion to The Trial of Orlok. Caballistics Inc does homage to *Resident Evil* and *Herbert West: Reanimator*. Interceptor offers an oddly contemporary line in 25th Century dialogue, while Snow/Tiger supplies gritty action. ABC Warriors delivers old-style thrills, and if the stylistic analogue of the American Civil War lacks imagination, there are plenty of other ideas on show, such as Behemeks equipped with silencers. (DK) 7

Small Press

Almost Normal Comics 1

by WEE; 80p from Smallzone
10 Cleveland Avenue, High Ercall
Telford TF6 6AH

This offbeat 22-page mini-comic from US creator WEE dwells on death and the darker side of life. The contents are a little aimless, featuring filler such as pin-ups of gruesome ghouls and amusing Fortean Times-style anecdotes. Although the eight pages of actual strip material is detailed and accomplished (especially *Gator)* this throw-away horror anthology is an aquired taste. (JE) 6

Awkward Fascination

by Baillie; 50p (or swap) from
13 Mossford St, London E3 4TH

Ah, the song of the small presser. The "real" work versus comics battle is the basis of this heartfelt down to earth comic. Most comics about making comics fall short as they trudge down a well worn path, however this one remains introspective in an enjoyable way. This may not be very polished (to some, that's a good thing) and relies more on the words than the art, but is certainly worth a read. (LO) 6

BAM #24

by various; £2.50 + 50p p&p
from Jason Cobley, 94 Elm Road
Wisbech PE13 2TB

Writer Jason Cobley – with an array of artists including Adrian Bamforth, P.J. Holden, Mitzi and Ed Traquino – presents a strong selection of Winston Bulldog strips. Making sure they don't hog all the glory is Garen Ewing with his brilliant Rainbow Orchid and Paul Harrison with Simian Smith. The top dog in the self-publishing pound. (CEB) 8

Booby Trap 1

by Chandler; £1.50 from
3 Ball Charlies Motor Exchange
14 Mill Hill Estate, Aldringham
Leiston, Suffolk IP16 4QB

Booby Trap is a selection of strips by one creator, Jon Chandler, and for a first issue the quality is very high indeed. Simple linework, nicely shaded sits comfortably with chandlers' meandering writing style. Don't look for method in the madness, just enjoy the ride. (AS) 7

Dreamtime 1

by Dinnie & Buchanan + Marsh;
£1.50 from
www.underfirecomics.com

Beautifully illustrated and professionally produced, Dreamtime reads something like a teaser comic, establishing the players in a much bigger story. As such it loses a little in delivery, it's over just as it really begins, but you cannot help but be impressed with the potential of what's on offer here. (AS) 6

Freakdaddy 3: The Kabeso Spell

by Sainsbury; £1.50 from
There Goes Tokyo
145 Clydesdale Road, Byker
Newcastle NE6 2EQ

As most of this issue is set inside the drug-addled brain of a homicidal pimp it probably comes as no surprise that this isn't the most straightforward of tales. Fans of Sainsbury's work will be pleased to see more splattered ink and airbrushed splash pages (with a couple of rough "pencilled" pages thrown in) but newcomers may be left confused. (AS) 7

Hearts and Flowers

by Martin; £3 from Martin
40 Gloucester Street, Newtown
Cheshire CH1 3HR

An A5 freebie (only available with the purchase of Terrible Sunrise #3) that's so good it deserves a review of its own. Essentially an interview with "wormwood" artist Chris Webster, padded with pin-ups by Webster and Martin. An interesting interview, revealing the influences, techniques and materials used by one fantastic comic artist. A nice freebie with a great comic – 'nuff said. (AS) 8

Hope for the Future 6

by Perrins & Livesey;
£2 from Perrins
1 Newton Park Mansions
St Mary's Road, Leeds L57 3JX

"There's a giant goat dude sat in the middle of town making people go mad and have sex." Great! A decent round-up of previous issues mean that anyone can join in on this excellent comic. Top notch artwork, witty script and chock full of fanboy references and gripes, this is an excellent mix of supernatural antics, mythology and humour. (LO) 8

The Rise and Fall of Trevor Melbury

by Davison; £2 from Smallzone
10 Cleveland Avenue, High Ercall
Telford TF6 6AH

A regional TV newsman is catapulted to national talkshow stardom and celebrity excess in creator Adam Davison's wonderfully crafted satire. Adopting a newstrip format, illustrated in a clean cartoon style, both the script and storytelling are very polished, the only negative aspect being this 12-page book's excessive cover price – you don't get much bang for your buck. (JE) 8

Terrible Sunrise 3

by Martin; £3 from
40 Gloucester Street
Newtown, Cheshire CH1 3HR

Terrible sunrise is a hefty A4 title, crammed with some of the best artwork I've seen in a while. Every page is packed with painstakingly researched and excellently executed art (with an average panel count per page in double figures!) As a historical epic – set in the summer of 1914 – the story may not appeal to everyone. Along with Deva Comics Out of Time and Colin Mathieson's Zulu, this takes a well earned place among the best period comics I've read. (AS) 8

Train to Shanghai

by Jackson; £1.20 from
18 Harpers Lane, Bolton BL1 6HR

Interesting autobiographical comic about an English teacher travelling to Shanghai. Generally poor artwork, occasional exceptional panels with some nice backgrounds and good use of texture and shading. Let down by lettering. (LO) 5

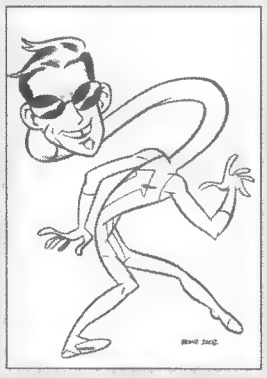
Zulu Water Cart Rescue 1

by Mathieson; £1.95 from Smallzone
10 Cleveland Avenue, High Ercall
Telford TF6 6AH

This confident dramatisation of the 19th-century Zulu wars between the invading British and defending natives is intelligently executed, and isn't quite the biased account one might expect. The crisp art, despite minor shortcomings, displays an individualistic charm, while the colour cover, quality printing and paper stock reveal the undertaking to be an obvious labour of love. If only the lettering had been more refined... (JE) 7

Mr Gum

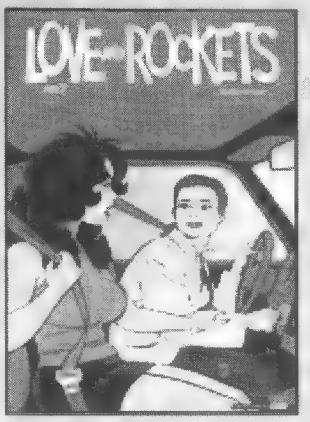
by Allred & Bone; Oni Press/
AAA Pop Comics



Mike Allred scripts a solo adventure for another of his retro beatnik mutants, this time the flexible Gumster who goes in search of love, but instead finds dastardly deceit. Much of the appeal of *The Atomics* came from Allred's fun retro-style art, and after the slightly disappointing results of his previous collaborative work, it a shame that he lets another artist loose with his creations. The usually fun Jay Bone's art is not used to its best, with more of a cartoony than retro feel. The cover's cool though. (MAT) 6

Love and Rockets 7

by Hernandez Brothers;
Fantagraphics Books



<-> Hmmm. I used to love this book. I can't help feeling recently however that there's too much treading water in each issue. I'm afraid the multi-part *Me For the Unknown* slipped from my grasp quite some time ago, and *Julio's Day* is by turns electrifying or just plain static. *The High Soft Lisp*, however, seems the most pointless exercise of all, risking criticism that it's just an excuse for Beto to draw a woman with over-large breasts. And a lisp. The continuing Maggie narrative remains the spark of light in an otherwise dull issue. (AL) 4

Q&A

345 Ditchling Road, Brighton BN1 6JJ

Baffle us with comics questions, or save us with answers!

Super Thriller annuals

Paul Murphy via e-mail

I HAVE three annuals called **Super Thriller Annual**, with copyright dates 1957, '58 and '59.

In them are stories about a superhero called Ace Hart, but no one I've spoken to has ever heard of him. Can anyone tell me anything about him? His origins are not explained in the 1957 annual; readers are assumed to be familiar with him and the background to his stories.

Also, were there any other **Super Thriller Annual**s apart from those I have?

*The Q&A Brain Trust's Dez Skinn kicks off with: Yeah, I had one of those too, and was mightily confused. **Super Thriller Comic** was one of those US-styled World Distributors titles that we had to contend with before the ban was lifted on importing genuine American comics. It ran from 1948 to the late 1950s, starting with #5, which picked up the numbering from **The Thriller**, having nothing whatsoever to do with AP's brilliant **Thriller Comics/Thriller Picture Library** of the same period. From #34, it did a Charlton, changing its title to reflect trends to **Western Super Thriller Comics**, lasting until #82 and sporting early Ron and Gerry Embleton art. If you've got three annuals, you're ahead of the game as most reference books list only one!*

Alongside Ace Hart, other obscure creations included Dick Daring (of the Mounties?), Tess Maran, Trigger Jackson and even a UK Rawhide Kid (by James Bleach). But my favourite has to be Swamphead Kelly. They just don't make them like that any more!

Concrete

Peter Clark via e-mail: mailto:peteandali@ukgateway.net

A LONG time ago you announced a new Concrete project from Paul Chadwick. I believe the name was **The Human Dilemma**. Any news on this or other Concrete projects?

Mike Conroy: Dark Horse publicist Lee Dawson says the series definitely is still happening, but that it probably won't appear until later this year or early 2004.

John Wagner

Sare Boorman via e-mail: sareboorman@aol.com

MY SON, who has been reading **Judge Dredd** for a couple of years now, and buys **CI** whenever he can drag me to our local comic shop, is interested in finding out more about Dredd's most regular writer John Wagner.

Would it be possible to provide a checklist of stories and comics that John Wagner has worked on?

Dez Skinn again: Not if we're to meet this month's deadline, but we'll try to slot one in next issue. So, in the meantime...

In brief, Pennsylvania-born John emigrated to Greenock, Scotland aged 12 and his first comics work was as a sub-editor in Dundee-based DC Thomson's fiction department.

*In 1971 he started freelancing for London's IPC/Fleetway, editing several girl's weeklies before getting caught up in the origination of **Battle Picture Weekly**, writing for **Action** and, of course, **2000 AD** to which the multiple award-winning writer has remained loyal for over 27 years.*

We'll try to nail down the specifics for next issue.

Looing for Knights of Pendragon

Mark Badham-Moore via e-mail: Mark.Badham-Moore@marshallaerospace.com

I HAVE issues #1-17 of Marvel UK's **Knights of Pendragon**, and at the end of issue 17 it is 'revealed' that #18 "will be the last in the present series". It also goes on to say that volume two is "already under way".

Can anyone tell me if that final issue came out and whether volume two ever surfaced? If issue 18 did hit the stands, I would very much like to buy it.

*Mike Conroy: The first **KoP** series did indeed end with #18, which hit the shops in December 1991. The identically titled second volume began in July 1992. A reprint – with added pages for the US market – of the strip started in **Overkill** #1 [April 1992], it ran 15 issues.*

*Steve Holland: Issue 18 did appear. The first series ran from #1 (July 1990) to #18 (Dec 1991) and was revamped for a second series #1 (July 1992) to #15 (Sept 1993). These later stories also appeared in **Overkill**.*

Strange cat people

Stuart Thomas via e-mail: wandrinfool@tiscali.co.uk

AN image popped into my head recently and it's been bugging me ever since. I seem to remember a strip from a British comic from the late '70s/early '80s about a kid (kids?) who wore a black cat costume and helmet and fought crime. The picture in my head makes me think of Spanish artist Vanyo. Anybody else out there have any idea what I'm going on about, or is my mind making all this up?

Steve Holland: Everybody now... Billy the Cat! *It ran in **The Beano** from April 1967 until 1973 (in its latter days as* Billy the Cat and Katie).

Artists were Dave Sutherland and Sandy Calder. It's probably the latter you're thinking of.

Doctor Who – damned or cursed?

Mike Kehoe via e-mail: mike.kehoe@lineone.net

JUST wondered if you could shed any light on why the early Dez Skinn-edited **Doctor Who Weekly** strip *City of the Damned* was renamed *City of the Cursed* for its US reprinting?

I have a vague recollection of reading that some archaic law in the US made it illegal to 'damn' people (?!) but, reading Kirby's **Forever People** recently, I noticed issue four was entitled *The Kingdom of the Damned*.

Dez, strangely enough: Damned if I know why. Equally I'll be buggered if I know why they replaced my name as editor with a colourist credit. Bastards! Maybe they just don't like our colourful use of the English language.

Severin's Hulk

Mark Currie via e-mail: mark@kjcomputers.co.uk

WHICH issues of the Incredible Hulk were inked by John Severin?

*David Roach joins in: Ah, a man of taste. For my money the Trimpe/Severin **Hulk**s are the definitive rendition of the emerald behemoth and coincided with some of the characters most memorable stories.*

You can find the pair in issues 108-110, 131-133, 141-151 and 153-155, all of which are terrific reads and still reasonably priced from dealers.

Battler Britton

Ilpo Lagerstedt via e-mail: Ilpo.Lagerstedt@welho.com

I'D like to find a good web site about Battler Britton by Geoff Campion. Could you help?

All the best from snowy Helsinki, Finland!

Steve Holland: There is no website dedicated to Geoff Campion or Battler Britton, *although some information appears, along with some original art for sale, at:* www.bookpalace.com/acatalog/index.html?http%3A//www.bookpalace.com/acatalog/Home_Geoff_Campion_Art_167.html&CatalogBody

Obscure '70s weekly?

Cliff Pooley via e-mail

DOES anyone else remember **Thunder Comic**? It was a British weekly that ran (I think) in the early to mid '70s. I can't find anything on the Net and I've never seen any listed for sale.

If I remember correctly, it was quite ahead of its time, the forerunner of **Action** or **Battle**. The first feature was about an ageing German WWI pilot who used giant bats to attack the Royal Flying Corps!

Can anyone add other stories it contained, how long it ran, actual publishing dates, etc?

*Steve Holland: To the first question: Yes, I remember **Thunder**. The paper only ran for 22 issues (17 Oct 1970-13 Mar 1971) before being absorbed by **Lion**. Most of the strips survived the transfer, marked (*) below. Here's a rundown of the contents:*

- The Terrible Trail to Tolmec *(which became the* Terrible Trail from Tolmec *after they got there; (*) as* The Jigsaw Journey)
- The Black Max *(*; this is the strip you're thinking of)*
- Cliff Hanger
- Fury's Family *(*; artwork by the late Denis McLoughlin)*
- Dusty Binns
- Phil the Fluter *(*)*
- The Jet Skaters *(*)*
- Adam Eterno *(*; survived the amalgamation of **Lion** and **Valiant** a few years later and is probably the best-known of all **Thunder** strips)*
- Steel Commando *(*)*
- Gauntlet of Fate

And, on the humour side, there was Sam *and* The Spooks of St. Luke's.

*David Roach adds: Across its 22 issues in the **Valiant/Lion/Tiger** tradition, **Thunder**'s contents were: Tolmec (anonymous), Black Max (drawn by Eric Bradbury and later Alfonso Font), Cliff Hanger (also by Bradbury), Fury's Family (by the late Denis McLoughlin, with Angus Allan scripts), Dusty Bins (by Geoff Campion), Phil the Fluter (with art by Mike Western, Mario Capaldi, Geoff Jones and others), Jet Skaters (by Ted Kearon and Geoff Jones), Steel Commando (a piece of cake for Ted*

"Robot Archie" Kearon), Gauntlet of Fire (by future Flesh artist W. Carrion) and finally Adam Eterno (by Colin Page, Tom Kerr and the great Francisco Solano Lopez). Most of these continued for a while in the pages of ***Lion*** *after the two papers (as they called comics in those days) merged and Adam Eterno carried on for years. As is the way of such things* ***Thunder*** *annuals continued to appear each Christmas for years after the comic folded and it is these which are the easiest to find these days since the actual comics seem rather thin on the ground.*

The feature which you remember, the Black Max, was a sort of horror version of DC's Enemy Ace and was rather atmospheric, particularly when drawn by Alfonso Font. I know quite a few people who remember the strip fondly though it seems only Adam Eterno had any mass appeal.

Answer Updates

Readers provide answers for previous issues' questions

Creepshow graphic novel

Tim Barnes via e-mail

IN ANSWER to Roger Newson's Q from CI#157: There were a number of factors that meant various EC artists did not contribute to the **Creepshow** graphic novel. Perhaps it's more a question of why would they.

Graham Ingels retired from comics, so he wouldn't have been interested. There was an interview with Gaines (probably in **The Comics Journal**) in which he reported that he was in contact with Ingels, who was working as a teacher and was somewhat embarrassed by his past connection to notorious horror comics. That said, Russ Cochran did tempt Ingels back shortly before he died to produce some painting of the Old Witch for auction.

Johnny Craig (I believe) and Jack Davis were working in advertising – the latter being spectacularly successful in that field (covers for **Time Magazine**, loads of stuff for **TV Guide**, film posters, album covers, and lots of ads appearing in comicbooks for Spalding). I doubt they'd have been interested, even in the unlikely event they'd have been able to block out the time in their schedules, or felt like doing some near enough pro bono work.

Williamson is notoriously slow and, besides which, isn't known as a horror artist (he only did two horror stories for EC that I recall, a **Tales from the Crypt** and a **Vault of Horror**). I'm a little hazy, but he was probably locked into doing the *Star Wars* newspaper strip at the time (he did *X-9/Corrigan* from 1967 to 1980, then *Star Wars* from 1980 to 1984, I think).

Al Feldstein and Joe Orlando had moved into editorial work and weren't producing art (I certainly can't remember seeing anything from them even in convention books/fanzines).

Often forgotten as one of EC's mainstays is Jack Kamen. Rather understated, and effective because of that. From memory, it was he who produced the art for the film poster, and not Wrightson (who as you point out is a mate of Stephen King's). While being well drawn, I thought the poster art was lacking in dynamism. I'm not sure whether Roger Newson is suggesting that Wrightson's art itself is mediocre (a statement with which I disagree), or that this book is a mediocre example of Wrightson's work. While I haven't read the book in years, I remember it being rather well drawn.

The Wheelchair Wonder

Jeff Tiley, 36 Kensington Park Road, Brislington, Bristol BS4 3HU

RECENTLY there were a number of Qs that no one has actually sent answers in for. I don't have the issues to hand so can't tell you which issues they were in I'm afraid. One question was about a wheelchair-bound footballer who had a blinding free kick!

I believe the story concerned was *The Wheelchair Wonder*, published in **Roy of the Rovers** around 1985. The guy concerned had polio I believe, but was able to come out of the wheelchair for 90 minutes a week and play for a team in what would have been the old 4th division. His trademark on the pitch was the afore-mentioned wondrous freekick, which always ended up as a looping corkscrew, bamboozling defenders and landing in the back of the net. I can't remember how long the story lasted, but I think it ended with him being cured of his disability but being unable to play football any more. I'm sure Tom Tully could shed more light on this!

The other question concerned robotic elephants at the end of the world. I think the story in question was *Metalzoic* by Pat Mills and Kevin O'Neill, published as a DC graphic novel but later serialised in **2000 AD** in 1986. Hope this helps.

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Movers & Shakers

The latest comicbook views, speculations, gossip and rumours

Reported by those diggers and delvers ITMA and the CI team of ITMites

Convention fever

WHILE one ex-Con man has turned publisher *[see boxed story below]*, an ex-publisher is doubling up his own convention activities.

Hot on the heels of his Comics Festival 2002, organiser Kev F Sutherland has announced two more events. In addition to next year's Bristol bash (May 29-30), he's making the bold (aka: expensive) move into Frank Plowright's old playground, central London.

To be held on November 1st as a one day event (there goes the late night drinking), the Holiday Inn Bloomsbury venue has already attracted positive interest from DC stalwart Bob Wayne, and this year's first timer Dan DiDio. So get those portfolios spruced up now.

Mallcon

BEATING Kev F to the punch with a London-based comics event, the 12-day ComICA kicks off on Wednesday, June 25th as the Mall-based Institute of Contemporary Arts holds its own comics festival.

Boasting such guest speakers as Charles Burns, Joe Sacco and Chris Ware, you can find out more details by calling 020 7930 3647 or checking the ICA's website on: *www.ica.org.uk*

Rock on, Ian

MUSIC journalist Ian Shirley has taken on an awesome task with his new book, **Rock and Roll Comics**.

To be published next year by SAF, it is set to explore the multitude of music references that have appeared in comics. From stars in their own titles (Kiss, Grateful Dead, et al) to fictional performers like Dazzler and Josie and the Pussycats, Ian's compiling the lot.

He's already interviewed a mixed bag of talent, from Pete Milligan to Rick Wakeman, and has spent six months researching back issues.

So, if you're the knowledgeable sort who likes chipping in, Ian's looking for help on such earth-shattering issues as, "When in the '70s did Captain America/Steve Rogers engage in a discussion over the merits of Elvis Costello?"

Email him on *ijshirley@hotmail.com* if you know of any further obscure music references in comics and bask in the knowledge that you've done something worthwhile with your mindful of comic trivia.

Low tide at Dark Horse

YOU'D be forgiven for wondering just how difficult it could be to "remaster" an old comic. Obviously there's more to it than meets the eye in the case of Jim Steranko's 1976 Fiction Illustrated graphic novel, **Chandler**.

Dark Horse solicited the updated version, retitled **Chandler: Red Tide** w-a-y back in February, 2000 and it has yet to make an appearance.

The scapegoat for this 40 month delay is that Steranko has been too busy taking on new non-comics work to "remaster" the book. Bottom line whisper from inside Dark Horse: seek out the original, the new book isn't likely to see the light of day... ever.

Marvel's Epic Trouble

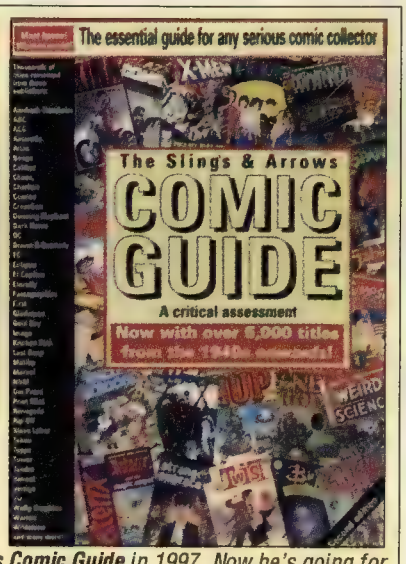
LATEST word on the first Epic title, Mark Millar's **Trouble** (ex-**Parents**) is that it's a real shocker. Not least in its revealing that Peter Parker was born illegitimate.

Time to rev up the PR machine!

GETTING THE ANG OF THINGS DEPT.

EMPIRE Magazine *calls it the summer's biggest gamble. Director Ang Lee comments "It's not a blockbuster, it's an abstract idea that happens to take a lot of money to realise." Movers just says, "Oops!".*

OK, so now we know why they dropped Incredible from the title. With over 90 effects shots to go and less than two months to the launch, things aren't looking too rosy, or emerald, if you prefer. Apparently, what interests Ang Lee is the "catalyst in the past" which causes Hulk's rage. And doing over 150 takes for a talking heads scene. Plus the "other" wholly CGI character. Yup, there's a twist in the tail, so place your bets now. We're currently torn between Daddy Banner (Nick Nolte, but he wouldn't need CGI) and a mental battle between Bruce and the beast for control. Not towing the regular PR hype party line, star Eric Bana gets the last word, "It was a ridiculously serious and morbid set. Then it dawned on me: right here, right now, we're making a Greek tragedy." Let's just hope the emphasis is on the Greek!



DO IT FA THE'SEN DEPT.

GUIDING light of many a UKCAC event Frank Plowright is back on the scene. He last resurfaced as the editor/co-author of the ***Slings & Arrows Comic Guide*** *in 1997. Now he's going for broke, publishing a double-sized (5300+ entries) second edition himself.*

With a whopping 800 pages and a 16 page colour section, this trade paperback should be out in July, priced £19.99 ($39.99 US). Nice one, Frank.

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Letters

Comics International, 345 Ditchling Rd, Brighton BN1 6JJ

A whole lot of stuff...

David Wickenden via e-mail: davidwickenden@hotmail.com

AFTER an almost 11-year hiatus from comicdom I'm back into the groove and loving every minute of it. I'm glad to see that **CI** is still going strong and it still has that 'fun time' feel to it.

I'm English but now living in New Zealand – my missus is a Kiwi – and I have a point relating to that plus a few more and a comment or two, so please bear with me. Deep breath...

Do you know how much **2000 AD**, **Judge Dredd Megazine** and **CI** costs in NZ? Well, it's $7, $18 (!) and $7 respectively. I don't mind shelling out seven bucks a month for **CI**, but when you add seven dollars a week for **2000 AD** plus the astronomical 18 dollars for the **Megazine** you're talking about quite a lot of cash, which could be spent else where (according to my wife).

So come on **CI**, talk to your Rebellion chums and let's have a competition with the prize being one year's free worldwide subscription for these great mags and to top it off you could also bung in **CI** as well. Just think of that 'good-will feel' you will be spreading around this globe at such a troubled time! I can guarantee at least one entry... Just give me four months to reply.

Which brings me onto my next point: just like Andy Wallace and LPR in **CI** #156, I seem to be having a shipping problem. After about four months without anything, issues #154 and #155 turned up together as did #156 and #157. Do you know if Diamond has sorted this out yet? I still haven't seen copies of #158/9. Am I correct in assuming that **CI** would ship to the States then it would come here to New Zealand?

And with regards to *Comics Economics*, I think it would be interesting, if possible, for you to break down the total number of sales for the main comics reading countries. For example, out of the 122,835 sales of **Batman** #613 how many stayed in the States and how many here shipped to the UK and beyond?

It would be interesting to see what are the most popular titles in the UK compared to the US.

One thing I've noticed about **CI** since I've come back is the reduced number of reviews you now do. It's my favourite part the mag – I'm now a dedicated **Ultimates** fan thanks to the reviews of Andrew Lewis and Alex Thompson! I seem to remember that you had loads more reviews before. I haven't seen one review for **Detective Comics**, **Spawn**, **The Punisher**, **The Flash** or **Batgirl: Year One**.

I don't know what other readers think, but I could do without pictures of the covers and you could limit the number of reviews per comic to two in order to cram more reviews in. Just a thought.

After being away for so long I was shocked to see the prices of recent back issues are so high – **Ultimate Spider-Man** and **Origin** are prime examples. What were the circulations figures for these comics? I'm guessing they would all be over 100,000 each. So why so expensive?

Surely everyone who wants a copy owns one by now?

Is it going to be like the old days (the reason why I left) when people are hoarding these items in the tens hoping to make some money?

And last but not least I fully sympathise with Mark Izzard (*Comment*, #157). It's a hard lesson to learn, but wives/girlfriends don't go well with superhero movies. Last year I took my girlfriend (now my wife) to see *Spider-Man* while we were on a working holiday in Canada.

Everything went well until a few days laer when I was e-mailing my friends back home about the rather voluptuous curves of the lovely Kirsten Dunst, only to be snuck up on from behind by my girlfriend with a mad look in the eye. Safe to say I then had to put up with two days of silence, followed by getting a king prawn in my eye, then followed by some superhuman grovelling on my part to sort it out.

To this day I still feel guilty looking at MJ between the covers of **Amazing Spider-Man** and just thinking about getting that *Spider-Man* video out makes me feel like a porno perv.

I now fully understand the psychological/mental powers of my woman. I'm sure she could blow away Jean Grey and Storm. Thanks for your time, sorry for the waffle.

By the way, I would like to state on record that my wife's body is far superior to that of Kirsten Dunst. And it's an honour just to look at her – my wife not Dunst.

It would fill the rest of this column to answer all your points, David. But, yes, international copies do go via the US, until some regional entrepreneur would like to handle our sub-distribution direct. Imagine those poor sods in France. ***CI*** *has to cross the Atlantic twice just to get over the Channel. Subscription prizes? Check page 13 this issue and look for a similar competition in the near future with our chums at Rebellion.*

Circulation breakdowns aren't readily available, but if any reader wants to sign up as our resident number cruncher, we're waiting to hear. ...Dez

Success at Bristol

David Hitchcock via e-mail

FIRSTLY, thanks very much for the **Springheeled Jack** article a few months ago.

I have read some reviews of the Bristol festival on the Net, none of which seemed very good, but I found the weekend to be exceptional. There was such a buzz, and a geniune interest in comics (quite possibly due to Jim Lee being there) which has seemed lacking in previous shows.

I think it was probably the best Bristol show yet

Beyond Bishop

Hill Trevor via email: hill.trevor@virgin.net

I WAS sorry to read about the demise of **CI**'s *Beyond 2000*. David Bishop's main reason for not continuing, namely his boredom with current comics, is a feeling I'm sure many of us can sympathize with. I identified with his realisation that he had got to the stage where he was buying many titles out of just habit or loyalty, without bothering to read them.

Unfortunately, comics buying can be very habit forming, and lead to a sort of comicbook promiscuity. This arises when the titles you regularly read no longer stimulate you, so you buy others to compensate, but still keep buying the first lot because you have large runs of them. This carries on until you find yourself with dozens of uninteresting titles.

It wouldn't be a problem if comics were still cheap, but at two quid or more a shot the habit suddenly becomes very expensive.

The solution is to actually cut your purchases down to a handful of your favourite titles, or even completely stop buying comics for a while and find some other hobby to interest you. The latter helps to put comics into their proper

Mike Kazybrid's COMIC CUTS

Script by Paul Kristian

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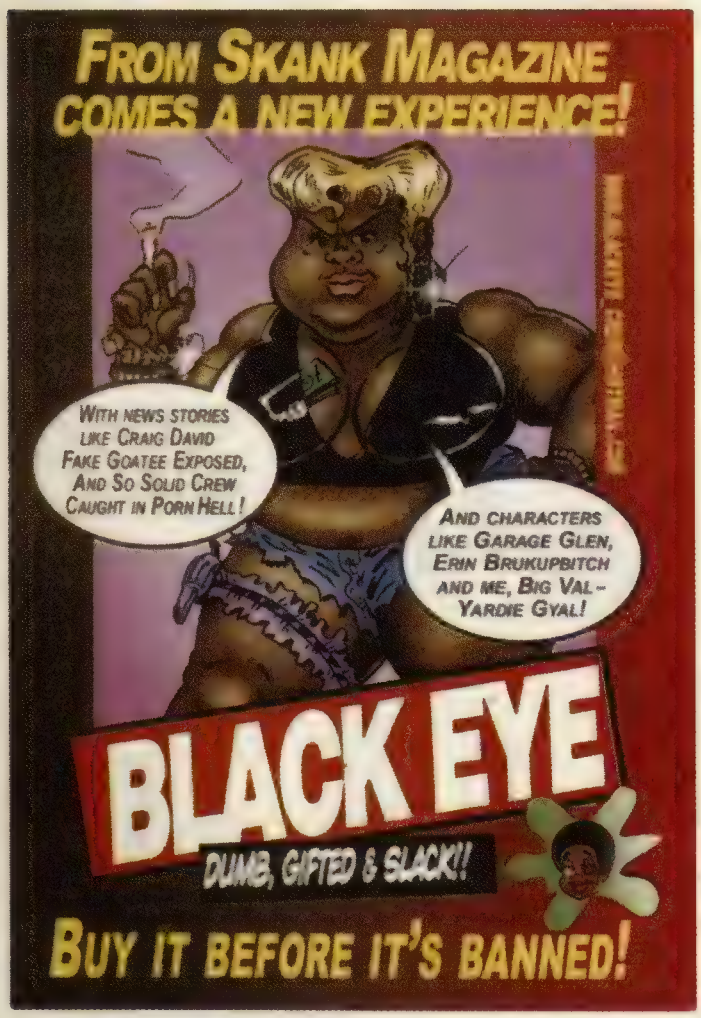
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perspective.

Another thing I'd like to comment on is the recent call for people to vote for the British strip they would most like to see return or reprinted. When this was first mentioned (a few issues ago), I tried to think, but soon realised I couldn't remember any.

I grew up on **Shiver & Shake** and **Whizzer & Chips**, but soon moved over to the Marvel UK stuff when I got a bit older. Titles like **Valiant** and **Hotspur** were on the decline and **2000 AD** didn't interest me for some reason. So, apart from calling for a return for *Sid's Snake* or *Frankie Stein*, I couldn't really offer many ideas.

However, I recently attended a local car boot sale, and purchased a pile of old British annuals. And the memories came flooding back. So, I would like to see a return for: *Adam Eterno* (from **Lion**), *Flying Fury* (**Hotspur**), *Morgyn the Mighty* (**Victor**), *Gums* and *Ivor Lott* (both from **Buster**).

Portal 31 and Hulk

Brent Cleever
Century 21 Toys
Kahra

THE old time storms have been keeping us out of touch here on Mars, so when one of our **Portal 31** readers mentioned your plug for our rag in *Sez Dez* (**CI** #158), I hopped on the first shuttle back to Earth and picked up a copy.

I don't mind admitting it brought a tear to my eye to see Dez ranking **Portal 31** with such esteemed publications! But then I glanced at *Letters* in #159. It seems the other chaps don't believe in leaving things at a stiff bribe! Instead, they all wrote in to express their thanks. Result: they get another mention for their journals while I end up looking like Charlie Churlish. So here's a belated thanks.

Incidentally, my anticipation of *The Hulk* movie was increased by Mike Conroy's revelation that the film is rumoured to be strong on "personal drama and tragedy" rather than "over-the-top action and fights". That description sounds very much like the version of the *Hulk* which the general public is most familiar with – the Bill Bixby TV show of the 1970s.

Even Bruce Jones's current comics storyline with Banner on the run, accused of a crime he did not commit, with very infrequent appearances by the snarling grape must stir some echoes.

Comicbook villainy

Julian Dass
Barnsley
South Yorkshire

DARREN Clarke's piece "What Makes a Villain?" (*Comment*, **CI** #159) was very interesting, but his take on Magneto I found strange; "a misguided zealot who is willing to solve what he thinks are his entire race's problems by wiping out what he feels is their greatest threat; humankind He speaks for his entire kind, not out of some evil twisted plan bid because… he believes he is right".

Darren virtually lets Magneto off as "misguided". But what Magneto wants to do is exactly what Hitler tried.

Hitler believed that Jews, Slavs, homosexuals, Bolsheviks, chronic alcoholics, manic depressives, Gypsies, schizophrenics, epileptics, the hereditary blind, the hereditary deaf, the congenitally "feeble-minded" etc were a threat to the greater German nation. And he believed that taking proactive and pre-emptive action was the right thing for his people. And it seemed like many agreed with him.

Magneto's fictional evil has been truly staggering in scale.

In the same issue of CI the "evil" as described by Andy Jones regarding the *Daredevil* movie was as interesting; "Daredevil stands over the rapist, sneers and gloats as a train cuts him in half". This sort of evil where "good" intentions of bringing wrong-doers to justice are perverted into "evil" actions (or inactions) has been a reoccurring theme in comicbooks since the 1980s and proliferates through innumerable movies. It lends justification to evil acts of vengeance to, as the heroes involved would argue, "promote a greater good". But when can that state of greater goodness ever be reached?

In the real world, we see that manifest itself as continuous spirals of self-righteous, retaliatory vengeance. But then maybe we see that in comicbooks as well?

Take it easy, Andy!

W.J. Collins
Willenhall, West Midlands

IN REPLY to Andy Jones (*Comment* **CI** #159): As one of the many "ignorant, brain-dead cretins" who enjoyed the *Daredevil* movie, I have a bit of friendly advice for you... Don't bother seeing *X2*, as Logan actually kills bad guys with those nasty pointy claws of his, just in defence of a few pesky kids.

Hulk: don't bother seeing that either, as I gather he tosses tanks around, killing soldiers. And all because he's a bit miffed!

And what's wrong with a black Kingpin? What's wrong with the DD costume changes? What would you prefer? Red Spandex?

As you seem determined to be pedantic, I say it was Daredevil's inaction that led to the rapist's death; technically manslaughter, not murder.

Oh, and by the way. IT'S ONLY A MOVIE! Remember this, as all that pent-up rage and aggression is not good for your health.

Lighten up! Stay calm!

As always, far more letters than we can fit in. We're going to have to seriously look at adding pages to accomodate your needs!

Directory

An at-a-glance reference guide to everything that counts in comics

Internet Listings

Comics creators

Jessica Abel ..... www.artbabe.com
Neal Adams ..... www.nealadams.com
Kyle Baker ..... www.kylebaker.com
Leo Baxendale ..... www.reaper.co.uk/main.htm
Brian Bolland Art ..... www.velouria.com/Bolland
Mark Bright ..... www.mdbright.com
Eddie Campbell ..... www.eddiecampbellcomics.com
John Cassaday ..... www.johncassaday.com
Gene Colan ..... www.genecolan.com
Chuck Dixon ..... www.dixonverse.com
Will Eisner ..... www.willeisner.tripod.com
Warren Ellis ..... www.warrenellis.com
Phil Foglio ..... www.studiofoglio.com
Jon Haward ..... www.jonhawardart.com
Jeff Jones ..... www.jeffreyjones.com
Bob Layton ..... www.boblayton.com
Joseph Michael Linsner ..... www.linsner.com
Tom Lyle ..... www.tomlyle.com
Scott McCloud ..... www.scottmcloud.com
Grant Morrison ..... www.grant-morrison.com
Alex Ross Art ..... www.alexrossart.com
Dave Stevens ..... www.davestevens.com
William Stout ..... www.williamstout.com
Bryan Talbot ..... www.bryan-talbot.com
Barry Windsor-Smith .. www.barrywindsor-smith.com
Bernie Wrightson ..... www.berniewrightson.com

Comics publishers

Abstract Studios ..... www.strangersinparadise.com
AC Comics ..... www.accomics.com
Acclaim ..... www.acclaim.com/comics
AiT/Planet Lar ..... www.astronautsintrouble.com
Antarctic Press ..... www.antarctic-press.com
Archie Comic Publications . www.archiecomics.com
Caliber Comics ..... www.calibercomics.com
Cartoon Books ..... www.boneville.com
Chaos! ..... www.chaoscomics.com
Cool Beans World ..... www.coolbeansworld.com
Com.X ..... www.comxcomics.com
CrossGeneration Comics ..... www.crossgen.com
Crusade Entertainment ..... www.shiweb.com
Dark Horse ..... www.darkhorse.com
DC Comics ..... www.dccomics.com
Drawn and Quarterly ... www.drawnandquarterly.com
Dynamic Forces ..... www.dynamicforces.com
Fantagraphics ..... www.fantagraphics.com
Harris Comics ..... www.vampirella.com
Heavy Metal ..... www.heavymetal.com
Knockabout Comics ..... www.knockabout.com
Marvel Comics ..... www.marvel.com
Northern Lightz ..... www.northernlightz.com
Oni Press ..... www.onipress.com
Quality/Warrior ..... www.comicsinternational.com
Sirius Entertainment . www.sirius.choiceoneonline.com
Todd McFarlane Productions .... www.spawn.com
Top Cow Comics ..... www.topcow.com
TwoMorrows ..... www.twomorrows.com
2000 AD www.2000ADonline.com
Viz (USA) ..... www.viz.com
Viz (UK) ..... www.viz.co.uk
WildStorm Comics ..... www.wildstorm.com

Manga and anime

AD Vision ..... www.advfilms.com
MVM ..... www.mvm-uk.co.uk

Downloadable software

PanelSys ..... www.panelsys.com

On-line auctions

Amazon ..... www.amazon.com

COMIC BOOK POSTAL AUCTIONS
Ten successful years specialising in Golden & Silver Age, artwork and vintage UK comics
..... www.compalcomics.com

eBay ..... www.ebay.co.uk
Heritage Comic Auctions . www.heritagecomics.com
Mile High Comics ..... www.milehighcomics.com
Yahoo Auctions ..... auctions.yahoo.com

Festivals and fairs

Amadora Comics Festival ..... www.bdamadora.com
Angouleme BD (France) .... www.bdangouleme.com
Comic-Con International (San Diego, USA)
..... www.comic-con.org

COMICS 2003 (England)
THE UK'S OFFICIAL COMICS FESTIVAL
Commonwealth Museum, Bristol: 31/5-2/6
.....www.sltsvac.org

Lucca Comics (Italy) ..... www.comune.lucca.it
Megacon (Florida, USA) .. www.megaconvention.com

MEMORABILIA (Scotland & England)
BIRMINGHAM NEC, GLASGOW SECC & LONDON
THE UK'S BIGGEST FANTASY FAIRS
.....www.memorabilia.co.uk

Raptus International Comics Festival (Norway)
..... www.raptus.no
Scottish Comic, Card & Collectables Fair
..... e-mail:marts@ redhotcomics.demon.co.uk
Wizard World (Chicago, USA) www.wizarduniverse.com

New and back issue dealers

Ace Comics ..... www.acecomics.net
Avalon Comics ..... www.avaloncomics.co.uk
Black Dog Comics ..... www.blackdog-comics.com

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SILVER ACRE COMICS
OVER 900,000 COMICS IN STOCK, 110,000 DIFFERENT ITEMS LISTED ONLINE
.....www.silveracre.com

Speeding Bullet .... www.speedingbulletcomics.co.uk
Whatever Comics ..... www.whatevercomics.com
Wonderworld ..... www.wonderworld.uk.com

On-line comics companies:

*By popular demand, **CI** now runs an at-a-glance overview of the major sites for on-line comics collectors and creators. Have your company listed for only £5 (US $8) a month. Bookable in 6-issue blocks, companies wishing to be included should send £30 or US $40 (UK: please add £5.25 to cover VAT) with trading name and website address.*

♦ Major companies requiring bold and boxed entries should send £60 + £10.50 VAT per 6-issue series, US $80 (£10/$16 per issue) and may add three lines of descriptive copy. Cheques and international money orders should be made payable to Comics International and sent to:
Internet Listings, Comics International, 345 Ditchling Rd, Brighton BN1 6JJ
Alternatively, payment can be made by credit card, fax: 0(11 44) 1273 566 333 or e-mail details to: Listings@comicsinternational.com

Retail Index: UK

Key to the abbreviations used:

imp = air imported new issues
back = back issues stocked
gn = graphic novels
tpbk = trade paperbacks
STO = standing order service (new comics reserved)
s-p = small press and fanzines
ind = independent comics
u/g = underground comix
prl = peripherals/supplies
RPG = role playing games
CCG = customisable card games
merch = trading cards, videos, t-shirts, posters, etc

Sorry, no websites, this is a shop guide

When telephoning from outside the UK, drop the first 0 and replace with: 01144 (USA); 0044 (mainland Europe & Eire); 001144 (Australasia).

Central London

Avalon Comics, 143 Lavender Hill, Battersea, London SW11 5QJ. Mon-Thurs 10-5.45; Fri 10-6.30; Sat 9.30-5.30; Sun 11-3.30 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, CCG, merch) 020 7924 3609

Book & Comic Exchange, 14 Pembridge Road, Notting Hill Gate, London W11. Mon-Sun 10-8. Nothing legal refused! (back, ind, u/g) 020 7229 8420

Comic Showcase 63 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0NE. Sun-Wed 10-7; Thurs-Fri 10-8; Sat 9.30-8 (imp, back, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, cartoon books, original art) 020 7434 4349

Forbidden Planet Superstore, 71-75 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DG. Mon-Wed/Sat 10-6; Thurs-Fri 10-7 (imp, back, gn, STO, s-p, ind, RPG, CCG, merch, film/TV, sci-fi, fantasy, books, video, games, mags, kits, toys) 020 7420 3666

Gosh!, 39 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PH (opposite British Museum). Mon-Sun 10-6; (Thurs-Fri to 7) (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch, foreign, largest range newspaper strip compilations in UK) 020 7636 1011

Mega-City Comics, 18 Inverness Street, Camden Town, London NW1 7HJ. Mon-Sun 10-6; (Thurs-Fri to 7) (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, film/TV, fantasy/horror, body art, subculture) 020 7485 9320

Mighty World of Comicana, 237 Shaftsbury Avenue, London WC2H 8EH. Mon-Wed 10.30-6.30; Thurs-Sat 10-7; Sun 10-4 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch, fllm/TV/fantasy) 020 7836 5630

Orbital, 9 Old Compton Street, London W1. Mon-Sat 10.30-7; Sun 11-5 (imp, back, gn, STO, manga, toys, Star Wars) 020 7434 9363

Outer London

A Place in Space, 101 Church Street, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1RN. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, prl, merch, sci-fi, original art) 020 8686 2400

Ashcan Ltd, 3 Eagle Star House, 299-301 High Street, Sutton, Surrey SM1 1LG. Tues-Wed/Fri 12-5, Thurs 9-6; Sat 10-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch) 020 8770 3815

Atomic Comics, 1112 High Road, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex RM6 4AH. Mon-Tues 10.30-5.30; Wed 1-5.30; Thurs 10.30-6; Fri 10.30-6.30; Sat 10-6 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, u/g, prl, RPG, CCG, merch, film/TV, art books, Games Workshop, toys, kits) 020 8597 8547

Calamity Comics, 160 Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 2HR. Mon-Wed 10-6, (Thurs-Fri to 7); Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, fantasy film/TV, books, videos) 020 8427 3831

NEW **Epic Heroes**, 21/23 Station Road, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 7JE. Mon-Sat 10-6. (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, RPG, CCG, merch, toys, posters, Transformers)

Forbidden Planet, 175 North End, Croydon CR0 1TP. Mon-Fri 10-6; (Thurs to 7); Sat 9.30-6. (back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, u/g, CCG, merch) 020 8688 7190

Into the Void, 262 Streatham High Road, Streatham SW16 1HS. Mon-Sat 9.30-7; Sun 11-3. (imp, back, STO, merch, toys) 020 8677 7037

Krypton Komics, 252 High Road, Tottenham, London N15 4AJ (next to Tesco) Mon-Fri 10.30-6; Sat 10-6 Nearest Tube: Seven Sisters Road. (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind) 020 8801 5378 fax: 8376 3174

They Walk Among Us, 26 Red Lion Street, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1RW. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (Thurs to 6); Sun 11-4 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch, fantasy/sci-fi/horror, subculture) tel/fax: 020 8948 8476

30th Century Comics, 18 Lower Richmond Road, London SW15 1JP. Mon-Wed 10.30-6; Thurs-Fri 10.30-7; Sat 10.30-6; Sun 11-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch, Gold/Silver/Bronze Age specialists, British comics/annuals, books) 020 8788 2052

South East

Ace Comics, 63/64 High Street, Colchester, Essex. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, RPG, merch) 01206 561912

The American Comic Shop, 1 Church Street, Chatham, Kent ME4 4BS (off High Street). Mon-Fri 10-5.30 (Tues until 5); Sat 9-5.30. (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, action figures) 01634 817410

Calamity Comics 2, 90 Queens Road, The Broadway, Watford WD1 2LA. Mon-Tues 10-5.30; Thurs/Fri 10-7; Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, fantasy film/TV, books, videos) 01923 249293

Cartoon Shop, 19 East Square, Basildon, Essex SS14 1HT. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, RPG, merch) 01268 534194

Central City Comics, 4 Eagle Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 1JB. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, foreign) 01473 233017

Chaos City, 20 Heritage Close, (off High Street), St Albans, Herts AL3 4EB. Mon-Thurs 10-5.30; Fri 10-7.30; Sat 9-5.30; Sun 12-4 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, RPG, CCG, merch) 01727 838719

Comic Showcase, 19-20 St Clements Street, Oxford OX4 1AB. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch) 01865 723680

Comics Unlimited, Unit 11, The Arcade, Letchworth, Herts. Mon-Sat 9-5.30 (closed Wed) (imp, back, STO, RPG, CCG, merch, videos, Games W/shop) 01462 480018

Comix-shop.co.uk, 7a High Street, Maidenhead SL6 1JN. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, tpbk, gn, merch, CCG, toys) 01628 777998

David's Comic Shop, 5 Sydney Street, Brighton, Sussex BN1 4EN. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.45; Sun 11-4 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g) 01273 691012

Daydream Nation Trading Cards at Hive, 6 Kensington Gardens, Brighton BN1 4AL. Mon-Sat 10-6 (CCGs, cards, sports, Ultra-Pro) 01273 687 877

Forbidden Planet, 60 Burleigh Street, Cambridge CB1 1DJ. Mon-Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, CCG, merch, videos, sci-fi/fantasy books, film/TV magazines) 01223 301666

Forbidden Planet, 44 The Priory Centre, Dartford, Kent DA1 2HS. Mon-Wed 10.30-5.30; Thurs-Sat 10-5.30 (back, gn, ind, PRG, CCG, merch) 01322 224837

Incognito Comic Shop, 1-2 The Friars, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2AS. Mon-Fri 10-5.30; Sat 9-5.30; Sun 11-4 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch, film/TV) tel/fax: 01227 785898

Into the Void, 324-325 Chartwell North, Top Floor, Victoria Plaza, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 5SR. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch) 01702 613021

Into the Void, 61 Lower Ground Floor, Lakeside Shopping Centre, West Thurrock, Essex RM20 1WT. Mon-Fri 10-10; Sat 9-7.30; Sun 11-5 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, prl, STO, RPG, CCG, merch, art, statues) 01708 862675

Off World: The Sci-Fi Store, 142 Market Halls, Arndale Centre, Luton LU1 2TP. Mon-Sat 9.30-5 (imp, STO, s-p, CCG, merch, Star Trek/Wars, sci-fi collectables) 01582 736256

NEW **Pat's Book & Comic Emporium**, 7 Suttons Lane, Hornchurch, Essex RM12 6RD. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, CCG, merch, trading cards) 07958 578989

Phoenix Fantasy, 9 Market Street, Margate, Kent CT9 1EU. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, merch) 01843 224768

Slough Computers, 50 Village Shopping Centre, Slough, Berks SL1 1HP. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, STO, ind, cards, second hand computer games) 01753 521594

Speeding Bullet Comics, 43 Hermitage Road, Hitchin, Herts SG5 1BY. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30 (Wed 10-5); Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, s-p, merch, STO, CCG, action figures, original artwork, life-size Spidey mannequin for hire) 01462 451117

NEW **Time Trek**, 46 High Street, Bromley, Kent BR1 1EG. Mon-Wed/Fri 9.30-5.30; Thurs 10-8; Sat 10-5.30; Sun 10-4 (imp, back, ind, gn, merch, STO, CCG, prl, sf TV/film) 02083 130677

Whatever Comics, 2 Burgate Lane, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2HH. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, kits) 01227 453226

Whatever Comics, 5 Middle Row, High Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1TF. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, model kits) 01622 681041

Midlands

Abstract Sprocket, 29 St Benedicts Street, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 4PF. Mon-Sat 10-5 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch) 01603 624410

Another World, 42/43 Main Centre (opposite Wilkinsons) Derby. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30, Sat 9-5.30, Sun 12-4 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, merch, rock/film/TV memorabilia, computer games) 01332 206606

Another World, 23 Silver Street, Leicester LE1 5EU Mon-Fri 10-5.30, Sat 9-5.30, Sun 12-4 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, foreign, alchemy metalware, rock memorabilia) 01162 515266

Another World, 11 Market Street, Nottingham. Mon-Fri 9-5.30, Sat 9.30-5.30, Sun 12-4 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, foreign, rock memorabilia, alchemy metalware) 01159 484122

Another World, 52 Stafford Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent ST1 1JB. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30, Sat 9-5.30, Sun 12-4 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, rock memorabilia, alchemy metalware) 01782 279294 fax: 202381 Mail Order: 271750

Another World, 23 Victoria Street, Wolverhampton WV1 3NP. Mon-Fri 10-5.30, Sat 9-5.30, Sun 12-4 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, rock memorabilia, alchemy metalware) 01902 717440

Forbidden Planet, 31 Cross Cheaping, Coventry CV1 1HF. Mon-Sat 9.30-6 (Thurs to 7) (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, RPG, CCG, merch, film/TV) 024 76229672

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 129 Middle Walk, Broadmarsh Centre, Nottingham NG1 7LN. Mon-Sat 9-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, film/TV) 0115 958 4706

Forbidden Planet Superstore, 38 Priory Queensway, Birmingham B4 7LA. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30; (Thurs-Fri to 6) (imp, back, gn, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, merch, books, games, mags, kits, toys, videos) 0121 236 3026

Ground Zero, 9 Toothill Lane, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 1NJ. Mon-Sat 9-5 (imp, back, STO, prl, CCG, merch, toys) 01623 622017

Nostalgia & Comics (FPI), 14-16 Smallbrook, Queensway, Birmingham. Mon-Thurs 9.15-5.45, Fri-Sat 9.15-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch) 0121 643 0143

Page 45, 9 Market Street, Nottingham NG1 6HY. Mon-Sat 9-6. (imp, back, gn, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, manga) 0115 950 8045

Phoenix Comix, 29 Abington Square, Northampton NN1 4AE. Mon-Sat 9.30-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch, RPG, CCG, action figures) 01604 602311

Travelling Man, c/o Gamestation, 1st Floor, 6 East Street, Derby DE1. Mon-Sat 9-5 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, prl, RPG, CCG, merch, action figures, fantasy books, film/TV) 0115 950 9231

Travelling Man, c/o Gamestation, 1st Floor, 16 Angel Row, Nottingham NG1 6HL. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, merch, action figures, miniatures) 0115 950 9231

North West

All-American, 102 Newport Street, Bolton BL3 6AB. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, gn, STO, merch, Star Wars, WWF, action figures, S/Age, videos, records, CDs) 01204 366553

Alpha Omega Comics, 33-35 Library Street, Wigan, Lancs WN1 1NN. Mon-Sat 9.30-5 (imp, back, STO, merch, videos) 07796 854644

Forbidden Planet, 92 Bold Street, Liverpool L1 4HY. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (Thurs to 7) (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, RPG, CCG, merch, film/TV, sci-fi/horror) 0151 707 1491

Forbidden Planet Megastore (FPI), 65 Oldham Street, Piccadilly, Manchester M1 1JR. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30, Sun 12-5 (2 floors; imp, back, STO, RPG, CCG, merch, books, toys, film and TV tie-ins, manga) 0161 839 4777

Imagination Station, 41 Bank Street, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 8HJ. Mon-Sat 9.30-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch)

Millennium Comics, 4 Church Road, Northwich, Cheshire CW9 5NT. Mon-Tues 10-5; Wed closed; Thurs-Fri 10-5.30; Sat 9-5 (imp, back, STO, s-p, RPG, merch, action figures, toys) 0160 649255

Moonwalk Collectables, 88 Oldham Street, Manchester M4 1LF. Mon-Sat 10-6 (back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, merch, Star Wars & Dr Who specialist, TV/film, British titles) 0161 907 3245

Thunderbooks, 332 Lytham Road, Blackpool FY4 1DW. Mon, Tues, Thurs-Sat (Sun June-Oct inc) 10-5.30; Wed 1-3.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch, media collectors' items) 01253 348321 fax: 407813

Thunderbooks II, 116 Friargate, Preston, PR1 9EE. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, RPG, merch) 01772 204287

Time Tunnel, 13 Earle Street, Crewe, Cheshire CW1 2BS. Mon and Wed-Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, STO, merch, film/TV memorabilia, action figures, videos, model kits) 01270 215496

Worlds Apart (FPI), 58-60 Lime Street (city centre), Liverpool. Mon-Sat 10-6 (Fri 10-7) (imp, back, STO, ind, merch, film) 0151 707 0839

North East

Books N' Comics, Unit 15, Forbes Building, Linthorpe Road, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS1 4AW. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, merch, fantasy and film magazines, Doctor Who/Star Trek) 01642 249143

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 30 Eastgate, The Headrow, Leeds LS2 7JL. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, LF film books, film/TV mags, posters, toys, kits, trading cards, stills, Star Trek/Doctor Who) 0113 242 6325

Forbidden Planet, 59 Grainger Street, Newcastle NE1 5JE. Mon-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch, film/TV mags, fantasy/sci-fi books, videos) 0191 261 9173

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 41 Dundas Street, Middlesbrough TS1 1HR. Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (Thurs until 7) (imp, gn, s-p, STO, ind, u/g, prl, RPG, CCG, merch, video, action figures, film/TV, manga) 01642 248889

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 12 Matilda, off the Moor, Sheffield. Mon-Fri 10-5; Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, original art, model kits, sci-fi/fantasy books, horror magazines, newspaper strip books) 0114 276 9475

The Last Picture Show, 38-39 The Lanes, The Oasis, Meadowhall Centre, Sheffield S9 1EP. Mon-Thurs 10-8; Fri 10-9; Sat 9-7, Sun 11-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, merch, film/TV and rock memorabilia) 0114 256 9604 fax: 255 3399

Millennium Comics, Stall 141, Warrington Indoor Market. Mon-Sat 9-5 (imp, back, STO, s-p, RPG, merch, action figures, toys) 01925 575657

Off-World Comics, 200 Park View, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear NE26 3QP. Mon-Tues/Thurs 10-5.30 (closed Wed); Fri 10-6; Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, CCG, merch) 0191 251 2288

Sheffield Space Centre, 33 The Wicker, Sheffield. Mon-Sat 10-5 (Wed closed) (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, merch, Star Trek) 01142758905

Travelling Man, Unit 8/9, The Corn Exchange, Call Lane, Leeds LS1 7BR. Mon-Thurs 10-5.30, Fri-Sat 9-5.30, Sun 11-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, merch, action figures) 01132427227

Travelling Man, 54 Goodramgate, York YO1 2LF. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, merch, action figures) 01904628787

West Country

American Dream Comics, 72 Walcot Street, Bath BA1 5BD. Mon-Fri 10-5, Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, original art, hobby kits, CDs) 01225424881

Area 51, 143 Gloucester Road, Bristol. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, RPG, merch, original art) 01179244655

Automattic Comics, Unit 2, 17 Pickwick Road, Corsham SN13 9BQ. Mon-Tues 12-5, (Wed closed), Thurs-Sat 10-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch) 01249701647

Collector's Choice, 45 Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1TX. Mon-Sat 9-5 (S/Age, British comics/annuals, vintage mags, toys, memorabilia) 01452410232

Forbidden Planet, 30 Penn Street, Bristol BS1 3AS. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30 (Thurs to 7), Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, film/TV mags, subculture) 01179298692

Forbidden Planet, 43-45 East Street, Southampton SO14 3HN. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30 (Thurs to 6), Sat 9.30-6 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch, film/TV) 02380230991 fax: 230996

Ian's Books & Comics, 195a Albert Road, Southsea, Portsmouth PO4 0JP (next to Tesco). Mon-Tues/Thurs-Fri 10.30-5.15 (Wed closed) Sat 10-5.15 (imp, back, tpbk, STO, s-p, prl, toys) 02392422731

Into the Void, 11 Rodbourne Road, Swindon SN2 2AG. Mon-Sat 9-5 (imp, back, STO, CCG, merch) 01793434363

Kaboom, 65 High Street, Totnes, Devon TQ10 9PU. (new, back, action figures, t-shirts, board games, RPG, import computer games, mail order) 01803863049

Kathles Comics, Unit BG29, Broadmead Gallery, The Galleries Shopping Centre, Bristol BS1 3XB. Mon-Wed/Fri-Sat 9-5.30; Thurs 9-6; Sun 11-5.30 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, CCG, merch) 01179221170

Kathles Comics, 20 Market Avenue, Plymouth, PL1 1PH. Mon-Fri 9.30-5.30; Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, CCG, merch) 01752257800

Kernow Comix & Kollectables, (opposite Kazbah Bar) Quay Street, Truro, Cornwall TR1 2HB. Mon-Sat 10-5 (back, gn, tpbk, s-p, ind, u/g, prl, CCG, merch, film/TV fantasy, manga, toys, action figures, UK comics/annuals) 01872279805

Paradox Comics, 17 High Street, Poole, Dorset BH15 1AB. Mon-Fri 10.30-5; Sat 10-5 (imp, back, gn, STO, ind, merch, videos) 01202661346

Purple Haze, 38 Eastlake Walk, Drakes Circus Shopping Centre, Plymouth, Devon PL1 1BX. Mon-Fri 10-5.30, Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch, film, TV, sci-fi/horror/genre books, videos, Star Trek/Wars, cassettes/CDs) 01752254136

Wonderworld, 540 Christchurch Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth BH1 4BE. Mon-Sat 9-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, CCG, merch, film/TV/media, beanie babies) 01202394918 or 393613

Wales

Cardiff Fantasy Centre, 1st Floor, Jacobs Market, West Canal Wharf, Cardiff. Sat 9.30-4.30 (imp, back, STO; established over 20 years) 029 206 58184 (eves)

Comix Shoppe, 13 Shoppers Walk, Swansea SA1 3AY. Mon-Fri 10-5, Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, RPG, CCG, merch, anime, Games Workshop) 01792642097

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 5 Duke Street, Cardiff. Mon-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch, sci-fi/fantasy/horror books, Star Trek/Wars) 029 20228885

Negative Zone, Provision Market Gallery, High Street, Newport, Gwent NP9 1DD. Mon-Sat 9.30-5 (imp, back, gn, STO, s-p, ind; established for 11 years) 01633222159

Scotland

Asylum Books & Games, 29 Adelphi, Aberdeen AB11 5B2. Mon-Sat 10-6 (Mon and Thurs to 8); Sun 12-5 (imp, back, STO, new/second hand RPG, CCG, books, original art) 01224574637

Black Hole Comic Shop, Unit 3, 5 Victoria Road, Dundee DD1 1ER. Mon-Thurs 10-5; Fri-Sat 10-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, second hand records, CDs, videos) 01382221037

City Centre Comics, 51 Parnie Street, Glasgow G1 5LU. Tues-Sat 10-5 (back) 0141 552 2208

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 12 Schoolhill, Aberdeen AB10 1JX. Mon-Fri 10-6 (Thurs until 7); Sat 9.30-5.30; Sun 12-5 (imp, gn, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, prl, CCG, merch) 01224622131

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 40-41 South Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1LL. Mon-Wed 10-5.30, Thurs 10-6.30; Fri-Sat 10-5.30 Sun 12-5. (imp, STO, s-p, ind, merch, foreign) 0131 558 8226

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 168 Buchanan Street, Glasgow G1 2LW. Mon-Sat 10-5.30, Sun 12-5 (imp, back, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, merch) 0141 331 1215

Justice Comics, Unit 36, The Arcade, Stirling, Fife FK8 1AX. Mon-Sat 10-5 (imp, back, STO, ind, merch) 01786447687

Kapow!, 28 Allison Street, Govanhill, Glasgow G42 8NN (off Pollokshaws Road). Tues-Sat 11-6 (buy and sell back, gn, ind, mags, videos, DVDs, new and second-hand books, merch) 0141 4241600

Plan 9, 9 Rosemount Viaduct, Aberdeen AB25 1NE. Mon-Sat 10-5 (Thurs to 6), Sun 1-4. (imp, back, STO, ind, RPG, CCG, WWF, merch, sci-fi) tel/fax: 01224 624467

Red Hot Comics, Block D Unit 7, Glenwood Business Park, Glenwood Place, Glasgow G45 9UH. Sat 11.30-6; Sun 12-5 (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, ind, prl, CCG, merch) 0141 630 0049

Northern Ireland

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 47 Winetavern Street, Belfast BT1 1JQ Mon-Sat 9.30-5.30 (imp, back, STO, ind, u/g, merch) 02890438744

Retail Index: USA

When telephoning from outside the USA, include the bracketed 00. Out-of-town US calls begin with the 1 prefix only. The following is a fraction of the estimated 3,000+ US comics stores.

Alabama

Optic Nerve, 1930 12th Avenue South, Birmingham AL 35205 (film, newsstand, ind) (00)1 205 933 2787

Alaska

Bosco's in Spenard, 2606 Spenard Road, Anchorage 99503. Mon-Sat 11-8, Sun 12-6 (new, back, CCG, RPG, cards, anime, merch) (00) 1 907 274 4112

Bosco's Diamond Centre, 800 East Diamond Blvd, Anchorage 99577. Mon-Fri 10-9; Sat 10-6; Sun 12-5 (new, back, CCG, RPG, cards, anime, games, Star Wars/Trek) t/f: (00) 1 907 344 3963

Bosco's in Eagle River, 11432 Business Blvd, Eagle River. Mon-Sat 12-8, Sun 12-5 (new, back, CCG, RPG, cards, merch) t/f: (00) 1 907 696 5166

Arizona

Lost Dutchman, 747 West Camelback Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85013. Mon-Sun 10-7. (new, back) t/f: (00)1 619 278 0371

California

Comickaze, 5525 Clairemont Mesa Blvd, San Diego, CA 62117-2342. Mon-Fri 11-7; Sat 11-6; Sun 12-6 (new, back, CCG, merch) (00)1 858 278 0371

Comix Experience, 305 Divisadero Street, San Francisco, CA 94117. Mon-Sat 11-7; Sun 12-5 (new, back) (00)1 415 863 9258 (f: 9299)

Flying Colors Comics, 2980 Treat Blvd, Concord, CA 94518. Mon-Sat 11-7 (Fri until 8); Sun 12-6 (new, back, ind, cards, merch) (00)1 510 825 5410

Lee's Comics, Inc., 1020-F N Rengstorff Avenue, Mountain View, CA 94043. Mon-Sun 10-9 (new, back: 1930s to date, anime, manga, s-p, adult, merch) (00)1 650 965 1800

Lee's Comics, Inc., 2222 South El Camino Real, San Mateo, CA 94403. Mon-Sun 10-9, (new, back: 1930s to date, anime, manga, adult, s-p, merch) (00)1 650 571 1489

Meltdown Comics & Collectibles, 7522 Sunset Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90046 (toys, comics, books) (00)1 323 851 7223

Stand-Up Comics, 10020 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito, CA 94530. Mon-Fri 11 7; Sat-Sun 11-6 (new, back, cards, anime, CCG, merch) t/f: (00)1 510 525 3344

Third Planet, 3822 Sepulveda Blvd, Torrance, CA 90505. Sun-Thurs 11-8; Fri + Sat 11-9 (new, ind, back, CCG, RPG, GW, sci-fi/fantasy, anime, merch) (00)1 310 791 6227

Hawaii

Gecko Books & Comics, 3613 Waialae Ave, Honolulu, 96816. Mon-Sun 9-9 (new, back, cards, toys, merch) (00)1 808 732 1292 (f: 2188)

Illinois

Comic Kingdom, 5941 W Irving Park Road, Chicago, IL 60634. (new, back) (00)1 773 545 2231

Louisiana

Comic Cosmos, 343 W Esplanade Avenue, Kenner, LA 70065. Mon-Thur 11.30-7, Fri-Sat 11-7.30, Sun 12-5 (new, back, cards, CCG, toys, anime) (00)1 504 286 0039

Crescent City Comics & Cards, 6111 Elysian Fields, New Orleans, LA 70122. Mon-Sat 11-7, Sun 12-6 (new, back, cards, CCG, RPG, anime) (00)1 504 286 0039

More Fun Comics, 8200 Oak St, New Orleans, LA 70118. Tues-Sat 11-7, Sun-Mon 12-6 (new, back, cards, CCG, merch, toys, CDs) (00)1 504 865 1800

Maine

Casablanca Comics, 151 Middle Street, Portland, ME 04101. Mon-Sat 10-9, Sun 12-7 (new, back, cards, CCG, RPG, merch, art) (00)1 207 780 1676

Casablanca Comics, 778 Roosevelt Trail, Windham, ME 04062. Mon-Fri 11-7, Sat 10-6, Sun 12-5 (new, back, CCG, RPG, merch)(00)1 207 892 0056

Massachusetts

Comicopia, 464 Commonwealth Ave, Boston, Massachusetts 02215. Mon-Sun 11-7 (Wed 10-8) (new, merch, CCG, manga, tpbk) (00)1 617 266 4266

Minnesota

Uncle Sven's Comic Shoppe, 1838 St Clair Avenue, Saint Paul MN 55105. Mon-Fri 3-6, Sat 11-4 (new, back, tpbk, gn, videos, action figures, CCG, RPG; est 19 years) (00)1 651 699 3409

New York State

Earthworld Comics, 327 Central Avenue, Albany, NY 12206. Mon-Wed 11-6; Thur-Fri 11-7, Sat 11-6, Sun 12-5 (new, back, ind, manga/anime, cards, merch) (00)1 518 465 5495

Forbidden Planet (FPI associate), 840 Broadway (at 13th St, NY 10003. Mon-Sat 10-10; Sun 12-10. (new, ind, back, RPG, merch, fantasy) (00)1 212 473 1576

Jim Hanley's Universe Ltd, 4 West 33rd Street (opposite Empire State Building), NY 10001. Mon-Sat 9am-11pm; Sun 10-9. (Everything to do with comics) (00)1 212 268 7088

Jim Hanley's Universe Ltd, 325 New Dorp Lane, Staten Island, NY 10306. Mon-Sun; 12-9. (Everything to do with comics) (00)1 718 351 6299

Midtown Comics, 200 West 40th Street, NY 10018 (00)1 212 302-8192

Ohio

The Laughing Ogre, 4258 North High Street, Columbus, Ohio 43214. Mon-Sat 10-9; Sun 12-5 (new, back, cards, merch) (00)1 614 267 6473

Oklahoma

Time Warp, 588 SE Washington Street, Bartlesville, OK 74006 (new, back, cards, games, toys, CDs, sci-fi/fantasy) (00)1 918 335 3373

Pennsylvania

Comic Castle, 17 West Fourth Street, Williamsport, PA 17703 Mon-Sun 10-9 (new, back) (00)1 717 322 8763

Golden Eagle, Berkshire Square, 1159 Berkshire Blvd, Wyoming, PA 19610 (new, back, games, CCG, cards, Star Wars/Trek) (00)1 610 376 8255

Golden Eagle, Fairgrounds Square Mall, Reading, PA 19605 (new, back, games, CCG, cards, Star Wars/Trek) (00)1 610 921 3160

Tennessee

Collector's World, 1511 E Main Street, Murfreesboro TN 37130. Open 7 days a week (new, back, CCG, merch, cards, CDs) (00)1 615 895 1120

Collector's World, Hickory Plaza South Central, 5751 Nolensville Road, Nashville, TN 37211. Open all week (new, back, CCG, merch, cards, CDs) (00)1 615 895 1120

Collector's World, 10820 Kingston Park #10, Knoxville, TN 37922 Open 7 days a week (new, back, CCG, merch, cards, CDs) (00)1 423 675 6830

Collector's World, 4006 Granny White Park, Nashville TN 37204 (new, back, CCG, merch)(00)1 615 385 8136

Texas

Cliff's Comics, 2205 West Berry Street, Fort Worth, TX 76110. (new, back, cards, merch) (00)1 817 927 7172

Collectible Heroes, 502 West Calton Road #307, Laredo, TX 78041. Mon-Wed 2-7.30; Thurs-Sat 11.30-7.30 (new, back, cards, merch) (00)1 956 791 8428

Dragon's Lair Comics & Fantasy, 616 West 34th Street, Austin, TX 78705 (new, back, games, anime, miniatures, prl) (00)1 512 454 2399

Virginia

Thore Comics, 3514 Oaklawn Blvd, Hopewell, VA 23860. Mon-Sat 11-7, (new, back, Silver Age, sci-fi, M:TG, cards, vinyl) (00)1 804 458 9561

Trilogy Shop, 700 E Little Creek Road, Norfolk, VA 23518. Mon-Fri 11-7, Sat 10-7, Sun 12-6 (new, back, merch) (00)1 757 587 2540 (f: 5637)

Wisconsin

Arcade Comics Entertainment, PO Box 301, Germantown, WI 53022. (new, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (00)1 262 253 9003 (f: 695 8226)

Lost World of Wonders, 6713 West Oklahoma Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53219 (00)1 414 328 4651 (f: 328-1355)

Direct Market Retailers:

***Comics International**'s Retail Index is THE international retail reference source for collectors, creators, publishers and journalists. Through it you can reach over 40,000 dedicated readers each issue for only £6 (US $10) a month! Bookable in 6-issue blocks, retailers wishing to be included should send US $60 or £36 (UK: please add £6.30 to cover VAT @ 17.5%) plus shop information as detailed on previous page to:*

Retail Index, Comics International, 345 Ditchling Road, Brighton BN1 6JJ, England

Cheques and international money orders should be made payable to Comics International. Alternatively, payment can be made by credit card, fax: 0(11 44) 1273 566 333 or e-mail: Listings@comicsinternational.com

The letters **(FPI)** after various entries indicates that the company is part of **Forbidden Planet International Ltd**

Retailers: International

Australia

Arcadia Unbound, 267 Forest Road, Hurstville, NSW 2220. Mon-Fri 10.30-7, Sat 10-4, Sun 12-3 (imp, back, manga, merch, CCG) (0061) 2 9585 1489

Books & Bounties/Comics Haven, 157a Charters Towers Road, Townsville, Queensland 4812. Mon-Sat 9-6 (imp, back, gn, merch, RPG, CCG) (0061) 7 4779 2408

Fan Attic, 1st Floor, 91 Elizabeth Street, Brisbane, Queensland 4002. Mon-Sun 9.30-5.30 (toys, Star Wars, sci-fi collectibles) (0061) 7 3221 1420

Kinda Lotsa Comics and Stuff, Shop 4, 503-511 King Street, Newtown, Sydney, NSW. Mon-Sat 10.30-7.30 (back, toys, merch)(0061) 2 9565 1054

Known Space Books, 1st Floor, 108 Gawler Place, Adelaide, SA 5000. Wed-Sat 12-6 (US/UK back) (0061) 8 8223 4304

Phantom Zone, 23 Anderson Street, Chatswood, NSW 2067. Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat-Sun 9-4 (imp, back, merch, RPG) (0061) 2 9411 3709

Phantom Zone, 198 Mann Street, Gosford, NSW 2250. Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat-Sun 9-4. (imp, back, merch, RPG) (0061) 2 43 25 4599

Phantom Zone, 207 George Street, Liverpool, NSW. Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat-Sun 9-4. (imp, back, merch, RPG) (0061) 2 9601 2622

Phantom Zone, 285 Hunter Street, Newcastle, NSW. 2300. Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat-Sun 9-4. (imp, back, merch, RPG) (0061) 2 4929 5717

Phantom Zone, 101a Argyle Street, Parramatta, NSW 2150 Mon-Fri 9-6; Sat-Sun 9-4 (imp, back, books, merch, RPG) (0061) 2 9891 1848

Phantom Zone, 268 Crown Street, Wollongong, NSW. 2500. Mon-Fri 9-6, Sat-Sun 9-4 (imp, back, gn, merch, RPG) (0061) 2 4228 7393

Austria

Comic Treff, Getreidemarkt 2-4, 1010 Vienna. Mon-Fri 10-7, Sat 10-1 (imp, back, gn, CCG) (0043) 11 586 76 27

Belgium

Forbidden Zone, 25 Rue de Tamines, 1060 Brussels. (3 floors; imp, back, merch, US/French, STO, toys) (0032 2) 534 63 67 (fax 538 24 52)

Canada

Connection MD, 1539 Van Horne Avenue, Montreal, Quebec H2V 1L4. Mon-Sat 11-6 (new, merch, back, CCG) (00)1 514 948 2627

Dragon Lady Comics & Paper Nostalgia, 609 College Street, Toronto, Ontario M6G 1B5. (00)1 416 536 7460

Little Shop of Heroes, 160 Wallace Avenue, South Listowel, Ontario N4W 1X9 (00)1 519 291 2281

Silver Snail Comic Shop, 367 Queen Street West, Toronto M5V 2A4. Mon-Wed 10-6; Thurs-Fri 11-8; Sat 10-6; Sun 12-5 (00)1 416 593 0889

France

Album, 67 boulevard St Germain, 75005 Paris. Mon-Sat 10-8; Sun 12-7 (imp, back, gn) (0033) 53 10 00 60

Album, 6 rue Dante, 75005 Paris. Mon-Sat 10-8; Sun 12-7 (imp, back, gn) (0033) 43 54 67 09

Alpha Omega, 25 rue de la Clef, 59800 Lille. Mon 2.30-7.30, Tue-Sat 10.30-12.30/2.30-7.30 (imp, back, French, merch, trading/gaming cards, toys, RPG, Wars/Trek, B5, L5R) (0033) 320 319 375

Astro City, 22 rue Masurel, 59800 Lille. Mon 3-7.30; Tue-Sat 10-12.30, 2-7.30 (imp, manga, cards, merch, kits) (0033) 320 55 1010

Impact Comics, 64 rue Condorcet, 75009 Paris. Mon-Sat 11-7.30 (imp, back, merch, CCG)(0033) 42 80 30 10

L'Antre des Dragons, 56 rue de Loup, 33000 Bordeaux. Mon-Sat 10-1/2-7 (imp, manga, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0033) 55 65 17378

Les Nageurs de Sable, 14 rue Courteline, 37058 Tours. Mon-Sat 11-1/2-7 (imp, back, cards, merch) (0033) 2 47 39 52 40

Pulps, 14 bld Morland, 75004 Paris. Mon-Sat 11-7 (imp, back, RPG) (0033) 1 42 72 55 25

Germany

Black Dog Comics, Rodenberg Strasse 9, 10439 Berlin. Mon-Fri 11-6.30, Sat 11-2 (imp, back, gn, t/cards) (0049) 30 4473 6486

Grober Unfug, Zossenerstrasse 32-33, 10961 Berlin. Mon-Sat 11-7 (imp, back, gn, CCG, merch) (0049) 30 6940 1490

Greece

Metropolis Comics, 94 Metropoleos St, 54622 Thessaloniki. Mon-Sat 10.30-3.30/7.30-11.30 (imp, back, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0030) 3 193 7775

Solaris, 6 Botasi Str, 10682, Athens. Mon-Sat 9-3.30/5-8.30 (imp, back, gn, merch) (0030) 1 384 1065

Holland

Henk Lie's Comics & Manga Store, Zeeduk 104, 1012BB Amsterdam. Mon-Sat 11-6; Sun 11-9 (imp, cards, merch, CCG) (0031) 20 421 3688

Hungary

Troll Kepregenyta'r, Terez Krt 13, Budapest 1067. Mon-Fri 10-6, Sat 10-1(imp, manga, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0036) 1 322 6026

Irish Republic

Forbidden Planet (FPI), 5-6 Crompton Quay, Dublin 2. Mon-Sat 10-6 (Thurs 10-7); Sun 12-5 (imp, back, ind, merch, u/g, UK, gn, STO) (0035) 3167 10688

Sub-City Comics, 2 Exchequer Street, Dublin 2. (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, prl, RPG, CCG, merch) (0035) 3167 71902

Sub-City Comics, Unit 10, Level 1, Corbettcourt Centre, Eyre Square, Galway. (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, s-p, ind, u/g, prl, RPG, CCG, merch) (0035) 3915 65994

The 3rd Place, Crow Street, Temple Bar, Dublin 2. (imp, back, gn, tpbk, STO, s-p, ind, prl, RPG, CCG, merch) (0035) 3163 36965

Italy

Avalon, via Battisti 9/b, Bologna. Mon 3-7, Tue-Sat 10.30-1/2-7.30 (imp, back, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0039) 051 234459

Avalon, via Pedriali 21, Forli. Mon 3-7, Tue-Sat 10-1/2-7 (imp, back, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0039) 0543 33523

Avalon, via Settembrini 20, Milan. Mon 3.30-7.30, Tue-Sat 11-7.30 (imp, back, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0039) 022 9400410

Avalon, via Foscolo 3, Padova. Mon 3-7, Tue-Sat 10-1/2-7. (imp, back, gn, RPG, CCG, merch)(0039) 049 658290

Avalon, via Bissolati 68, Rome. Mon 3-7, Tue-Sat 10-1/2-7 (imp, back, gn, CCG, cards, merch)

Avalon, via Magenta 0, Torino. Mon 3.30-7, Tue-Sat 10.30-1, 2-7.30 (imp, back, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0039) 011 5617252

Forbidden Planet, via Pinerolo 11/15, 00182 Rome (imp, back, gn) (0039) 06 70305702

Il Marchio Giallo, via Deghi Scipioni 116, Rome. Tue-Sat 10.30-1/2-7.30 (imp, back, merch, kits) (0039) 06 361 40 60

La Borsa del Fumetto, via Lecco 16, 20124 Milano. (imp, back, European and RPG, CCG) (0039) 11 5617252

Malaysia

The Mind Shop, Starhill Centre, Jalang Bukit Bintag, Kuala Lumpur. Mon-Sat 11-10 (imp, CCG, RPG, merch) (00603) 241 8871

The Mind Shop, S 58 Bandar Utama, Petaling Jaya. Mon-Sat 11-10 (imp, CCG, RPG, merch) (00603) 719 8246

The Mind Shop, Jin SS21/39, Petaling Jaya. Mon-Sat 11-10 (imp, CCG, RPG, merch) (00603) 717 6602

New Zealand

Heroes For Sale, Level 2, 62 Queen St, Auckland. Mon-Sat 10-7 (imp, back, s-p, merch, ind, u/g)(0064) 9 307 0682

Whitcoulls Corner Branch, 210 Queen Street, Private Bag 92098, Auckland. (imp, back, gn, tpbk, s-p, merch, ind, u/g) (0064) 9 356 5400 (fax: 9 356 5408)

Portugal

BdMania, Rua das Flores 67-71 R/C, 1200 Lisboa. Mon-Sat 11-7.30 (imp, back, CCG, merch) (00351) 21 346 1207

Interzona, Centro Comercial Brasilia, Loja 203, Rua Luis Veaga Lertao 98-120, 6050 Porto. Mon-Sat 11-11 (imp, back, gn, CCG, merch) (00351) 22 609 1460

Mundo Fantasma, Centro Comercial Brasilia, Rua Luis Veiga Leitao, 98/120, 1 Andar-Loja 203, 4050-399 Porto. Mon-Sat 11-11 (US imp, back, gn, CCG, merch) (00351) 22 609 1460

South Africa

Euroniag, Shop 79A, East Rand Mall, Boksburg, Johannesburg. Mon-Sun 9-10 (imp, back, gn, CCG, merch) (0027) 11 896 3773

Zed Bree's Comic Universe, Mediterr-anean Building, 24 Tenth Ave, Edenvale 1610 Gauteng. 9.30-6 (imp, merch, gn, CCG) 00 2711 453 4215 (fax 453 4459)

Spain

Gigamesh, RDA San Pedro 53, 08010 Barcelona. Mon-Sat 10-1.30/4.30-8 (imp, gn, RPG, CCG, merch) (0034) 3 246 6359

Sweden

Comics Heaven, Stora Nygatan 23, 11127 Stockholm. Mon-Sat 10-6.30 (imp, back, gn, merch)(0046) 8 202516

Switzerland

Analph Comicladen Strassburgstr, 10 PO Box 1030, 8004 Zürich. (0041) 1 2419695 fax 1 2403442

The letters **(FPI)** after entries indicate that the company is part of **Forbidden Planet International Ltd**

International Festivals

A listing of the world's major comics festivals and conventions. For further information, call the organisers on the phone, fax or e-mail numbers provided. To view updates, contact them on their websites. Organisers' estimates of their previous year's attendance is given in brackets.

July 17-20: United States

COMIC-CON INTERNATIONAL '03, San Diego, California. (2002 est: 53,000). Organisers: Comic-Con International, PO Box 128458, San Diego, CA 92112-8458. Tel: 001 619 491 2475 fax: 001 619 414 1022. Website: www.comic-con.org

July 26-27: England

MEMORABILIA '03, NEC, Birmingham. (2002: 18,853). Organisers: Made in Heaven, 1 Star Street, Moffat, Dumfriesshire DG10 9DR. Tel: 01683 220787 fax: 01683 220798. Website: www.memorabilia.co.uk

August 8-10: United States

WIZARD WORLD CHICAGO CON 2003. (2001 est: 35,000) Organisers: Wizard World Chicago, 151 Wells Avenue, Congers, NY 10920-2064. Tel: 001 608 226 0200. Website: www.wizarduniverse.com

August 22-24: Canada

CANADIAN NATIONAL EXPO '03, Metro Toronto Convention Center, Toronto, Ontario. (2002 attendance: 15,000) E-mail: info@hobbystars.com

August 23-24: Scotland

MEMORABILIA '03, The SECC, Glasgow. (2002 attendance: 7,342) Organisers: Made in Heaven, 1 Star St, Moffat, Dumfriesshire DG10 9DR. Tel: 01683 220787 fax: 01683 220798. Website: www.memorabilia.co.uk

August 29-Sept 1: United States

DRAGON*CON 2003, Atlanta, Georgia. (2002: 20,000). Organisers: Dragon*Con, PO Box 16459, Atlanta, GA 30321-9998. Tel: 001 770 909 0115 fax: 001 770 909 0112. E-mail: dragoncon@dragoncon.org Website: www.dragoncon.org

September 12-14: Norway

RAPTUS INTERNATIONAL COMICS FESTIVAL. (2002: 5,000). Organisers: Raptus Bergen Comics Festival, PO Box 768, Central 5807 Bergen, Norway. Tel/fax: 0047 55 32 88 55. E-mail: awa@hib.no Website: www.raptus.no

October 11-12: Belgium

FACTS 2003, ICC Citadelpark, 9000 Gent. (2002 est: 3,000). Organisers: Forbidden Zone, 25 Rue de Tamines, 1060 Brussels, Belgium. Tel: 0032 2 534 63 67 fax 0032 2 538 24 52. Website: www.facts-convention.com

October: Poland

THE 14TH INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF COMICS. Organisers: Lodzki Dom Kultury, ul. Traugutta 18, 90-113 Lodz, Poland. Tel: 0042 633 98 00 ext 244 or 247. E-mail: festiwal@ldk.lodz.pl Date: TBA

October 18-November 3: Portugal

BD-AMADORA '03. Organisers: Festival Internacional de Banda Desenhada da Amadora, av do Brasil 52-A, 2700-134 Amadora. Tel: 00351 21 499 8910 fax: 00351 21 496 2353. E-mail: bd.amadora@mail.telepac.pt Website: www.bdamadora.com

October 31-November 2: Italy

LUCCA COMICS. (2002 est: 46,000) Organisers: Lucca Comics, Via della Cavallerizza 11, 55100 Lucca, Italy. Tel: 0039 583 48522 fax: 0039 583 91203.

October: United States

BALTIMORE COMIC-CON, The Baltimore Convention Centre, One West Pratt Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201. Contact: Marc Nathan. Tel: 001 410 526 7410. E-mail: cardscomicscollectibles@yahoo.com Date: TBA

November 29-30: England

MEMORABILIA '03, NEC, Birmingham. (2002: 19,351). Organisers: Made in Heaven, 1 Star Street, Moffat, Dumfriesshire DG10 9DR. Tel: 01683 220787 fax: 01683 220798. Website: www.memorabilia.co.uk

Comics Publishers

North America

Unlike Europe, North American publishers invariably favour indie status to that of being labelled small press. This results in there being hundreds of comics publishers.

While circulations vary immensly, the following are the continent's major comicbook producers with titles printing between 5,000 and 150,000 copies. Contact phone numbers are given where readily available.

AARDVARK-VANAHEIM, PO Box 1674 Station C, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2G 4R2 (Cerebus)

ABSTRACT STUDIOS, PO Box 271487, Houston, TX 77277-1487 (Strangers in Paradise)

AC COMICS, PO Box 521216, Longwood, FL 32752-1216 (adventure titles, Golden Age superhero and western reprints)

ACCLAIM COMICS, 1 Acclaim Plaza, Glen Cove, NY 11542 (game tie-in adventure, Valiant superhero imprint. dormant) (00)1 516 656 5000

AiT/PLANET LAR, 2034 47th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94116 (graphic novels) (00)1 415 504 7516

ALTERNATIVE COMICS, 503 North West 37th Ave, Gainesville, FL 32609-2204 (alternative and graphic novels) (00)1 352 373 6336

AMERICAN MEDIA CONSUMER ENTERTAINMENT, INC, 600 East Coast Avenue, Lantana, Florida 33464 (Cracked) (00)1 561 586 1111

ANTARCTIC PRESS, 7272 Wurzbach, Suite 204, San Antonio, Texas TX 78240 (adventure and US manga)

ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, 325 Fayette Avenue, Mamaroneck, NY 10543 (humour) (00)1 914 381 5155

AVATAR PRESS, 9 Triumph Drive, Urbana, Illinois, IL 61802 (horror fantasy titles) (00)1 217 384 2211

AWESOME ENTERTAINMENT, 9744 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 402, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, CA 90212 (adventure titles; dormant)

BONGO ENTERTAINMENT, 1440 South Sepulveda Boulevard, 3rd Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90025 (The Simpsons and related humour titles) (00)1 310 966 6168

CALIBER COMICS, PO Box 6191, Plymouth, MI 48170 (black and white adventure titles) (00)1 734 462 0457

CARTOON BOOKS, PO Box 16973, Columbus, OH43216 (Bone and related)

CROSSGENERATION COMICS, 4023 Tampa Road, Suite 2400, Oldsmar, FL 34677 (fantasy adventure) (00)1 813 891 1702

CRUSADE FINE ARTS LTD, PO Box 845, Bayport, NY 11705 (fantasy and adventure) (00)1 631 472 2866

DARK HORSE COMICS, 10956 South East Main Street, Milwaukie, OR 97222 (adventure titles, licensed, US and Japanese manga) (00)1 503 652 8815

DC COMICS, 1700 Broadway, NY 10019 (adventure and humour, MAD, Vertigo and Paradox Press imprints) (00)1 212 636 5400

DISNEY COMICS, 500 South Buena Vista Street, Burbank, CA 91521 (humour titles) (00)1 818 507 5739

DRAWN & QUARTERLY, PO Box 48056, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2V 4SB (black and white biog)

DREAMWAVE PRODUCTIONS, 2750 14th Avenue, Suite 302, Markham, Ontario L3R 0B6, Canada

DYNAMIC FORCES, 155 Ninth Avenue, Suite E, Runnemede, NJ 08078 (variant editions and merchandise) (00)1 856 312 1040

FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS, 7563 Lake City Way North East, Seattle, Washington 98115 (adventure, biographical and Eros adult) (00)1 206 524 1967

HARRIS COMICS, 1115 Broadway, 8th Floor, NY 10010 (Vampirella, fantasy and horror) (00)1 212 807 7100

HARVEY COMICS ENTERTAINMENTS, 100 Wilshire Boulevard, Santa Monica, CA 91401 (humour) (00)1 310 451 3377

HEAVY METAL, 100 Merrick Road, Suite 400 East, The Rockville Center, NY 11570 (adult fantasy magazines and spin-off editions) (00)1 516 594 2130

HUMANOIDS PUBLISHING, PO Box 931658, Hollywood, California CA 90093 (US-European editions) (00)1 714 2880200

IMAGE COMICS, 1440 North Harbor Boulevard, Suite 305, Fullerton, CA 92835 (adventure) (00)1 714 2880200

MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT GROUP, 10th Floor, East 40th Street, New York, NY 10016 (adventure, humour and licensed) (00)1 212 696 0808

NBM PUBLICATIONS, 185 Madison Avenue, Suite 1504, NY 10016 (adult fantasy graphic novels and magazines)

ONI PRESS, 6336 South East Milwaukie Avenue, PMB 30, Portland, OR 97202 (adventure) (00)1 503 233 1377

RADIO COMIX, 11765 West Avenue, PMB 117, San Antonio, TX 78216 (anthropomorphic manga) (00)1 210 348 7195

SIRIUS ENTERTAINMENT, INC, PO Box 128, Stanhope, NJ 07874 (adult)

SLAVE LABOR GRAPHICS PUBLISHING, 848 The Almeda, San Jose, CA 95126 (black and white fantasy) (00)1 408 279 0451

TOP COW, 10390 Santa Monica Boulevard #110, Los Angeles, CA 90025 (adventure and licensed)

TOP SHELF PRODUCTIONS, PO Box 1282, Marietta, GA 30061-1282 (alternative and biographical) (00)1 770 425 0551

TWOMORROWS PUBLISHING, 1812 Park Drive, Raleigh, North Carolina, NC 27605 (comics feature magazines) (00)1 919 833 8092

VEROTIK PRESS, PO Box 64859, Los Angeles, CA 07043 (adult fantasies)

VIZ COMICS, PO Box 77010, San Francisco, CA 94107 (English translated manga)

WaRP GRAPHICS, 43 Haight Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601 (Elfquest and spin-offs) (00)1 914 473 9277

WILDSTORM, 7910 Ivanhoe Street, #438 La Jolla, CA 92037 (includes ABC, Cliffhanger and Homage DC subsidiary imprints)

United Kingdom

The following are major UK newsstand comics and graphic novel publishers. If calling from outside of the UK, you should drop the first 0 and replace with: 01144 (USA); 0044 (mainland Europe and Eire); 001144 (Australasia).

DC THOMSON, Albert Square, Dundee DD1 9QJ (humour and adventure comics, pocket books and annuals)

EGMONT MAGAZINES LTD, 25-31 Tavistock Place, London WC1H 9SU (humour, licensed and pre-school titles) 020 7344 6400

HAMLYN BOOKS, 2-4 Heron Quays, London E14 4JB (2000 AD graphic novels) 020 7531 8584

I FEEL GOOD LTD, 9 Dollington Street, London EC1V 0BQ (Viz) 020 7687 7000

JOHN BROWN PUBLISHING, The Boathouse, Crabtree Lane, Fulham, London SW6 (albums) 020 7381 6007

KNOCKABOUT COMICS, 10 Acklam Road, London W10 5QZ (humour and underground comix, graphic novels) 020 8969 2945

PANINI COMICS (UK), Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent KT2 5UJ (humour and adventure titles, Marvel licensed) 01892 500 100

REBELLION DEVELOPMENTS LTD, The Studio, Brewer Street, Oxford OX11QN (Judge Dredd Megazine and 2000 AD) 01865 792201

THE REDAN COMPANY, Canon Court East, Abbey Lawn, Shrewsbury SY2 5DE (pre-school humour and licenced titles) 01743 364433

SAVOY BOOKS, 446 Wilmslow Road, Withington, Manchester M20 3BW (adult comic magazines, books and graphic novels) 0161 833 2664

TITAN ENTERTAINMENT GROUP LTD, Titan House, 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP (licensed graphic novels, books, magazines and comics) 020 7620 0200

France

The following are the country's major comics and album publishers. If phoning from the USA, the country code of 0033 becomes 011 33

ALBIN MICHEL, 22 rue Huyghens, 75014 Paris (albums) (0033) 1 42 79 10 00

CASTERMAN, 66 rue Bonaparte, 75006, Paris (albums and manga) (0033) 1 40 51 28 00

DARGAUD, 6 rue Gager Gabillot, 75015 Paris (albums and manga) (0033) 1 40 45 35 39

DELCOURT, 5 passage du Mont-Cenis, 75018 Paris (albums and comics) (0033) 1 53 41 86 10

FLUIDE GLACIAL, 33 avenue du Main, BP 187, 75755 Paris (comics and albums) (0033) 1 43 20 23 96

GLENAT, 31 rue Ernest Renan, 92130 Issy les Moulineaux (albums and manga) (0033) 1 41 46 11 11

J'AI LU, 84 rue de Grenelle, 75007 Paris (licenced Japanese manga) (0033) 1 44 39 34 70

LES HUMANOIDES ASSOCIES, 24 avenue Philippe Auguste, 75011 Paris (albums)(0033) 1 44 93 88 33

MARVEL, BP 62, 06702 St Laurent Duvar (0033) 1 92 12 57 57

SEMIC FRANCE, 45 rue Broca, 75005 Paris (licenced comics and albums) (0033) 1 43 36 32 00

Italy

The following are the country's major comics and album publishers. If phoning from the USA, the country code of 0039 becomes 011 39

SERGIO BONELLI EDITORE, via Buonarroti 38, 20145 Milano (black and white comics) (0039) 02 96480403

MARVEL ITALIA, viale Emilio Po' 380, 41100 Modena (Marvel licensed titles)

CULT COMICS, viale Emilio Po' 380, 41100 Modena (Image and Dark Horse licensed)

MAGIC PRESS, Zona industriale via Ragusa 18, 00040 Pavona, Roma (Vertigo and WildStorm licensed) fax: (0039) 06 93020361

STAR COMICS, strada Selvette 1bis/1 Bosco (PG) (comics and black and white manga)

ASTORINA S.R.I., via Boccaccio 32, 20123 Milano (Diabolik original and reprint black and white)

KING COMICS, via Pinerolo 3, 00182 Roma (comics)

Spain

The following are the country's comics and album publishers. If phoning from the USA, the country code of 0034 becomes 011 34

NORMA EDITORAL, Fluvià 89, 08019 Barcelona (licensed DC and Dark Horse comics and albums) 0034 93 303 68 20

EDITORIAL PLANETA-DE AGOSTINI, SA, Aribau 185, 08021 Barcelona (licensed Dark Horse comics and albums)

TOUTAIN EDITOR, SA, Diagonal 325, E-08009 Barcelona (licensed Marvel, Dark Horse, Chaos!, Image and manga comics and albums) 0034 93 344 06 00

EDICIONES LA CÚPULA, Plaza de las Beatas 3, E-08003 Barcelona (adult comics and albums) 0034 32 682 8 05

Mail Order Specialists

Key to abbreviations used:

w/s = wholesale available
dis = bulk discount terms
cat = phone/write for catalogue
s-cat = sae for catalogue
wants = wants lists accepted
s-wants = sae with wants lists
CoBRA = Comic Book Retailers' mail order protection scheme
cc = major credit cards accepted
sae = send stamped, addressed envelope with enquiry

When telephoning from outside the UK, drop the first 0 and replace with: 01144 (USA); 0044 (mainland Europe & Eire); 001144 (Australasia).

Golden Age

Generally acknowledged as being published between 1938 and 1945, the first age of superhero comics, but herein designated to cover all pre-Silver Age American comics.

Comic Biz, PO Box 7041, London N12 9NF (wants, CoBRA, cc, cat) 020 8446 3464

Comic Book Postal Auctions Ltd, 40-42 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3ND (cat) 020 7424 0007

Mighty World of Comicana, 237 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2 (dis, cat, CoBRA, cc) 020 7836 5630

Quality Comics, 345 Ditchling Rd, Brighton BN1 6JJ (CoBRA, cc)

Silver Acre Comics, PO Box 114, Chester CH4 8WQ (s-wants, cc) 01244 680 048 (fax: 680686)

Silver Age

*Accepted as starting in 1955 with DC's superhero rebirth through **Detective Comics** #225 (intro-ducing the Martian Manhunter) and **Showcase** #4 (introducing the Barry Allen Flash). Herein covering titles up to late 1960s.*

Comic Biz, PO Box 7041, London N12 9NF (wants, CoBRA, cc, cat) 020 8446 3464

Comic Book Postal Auctions Ltd, 40-42 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3ND (cat) 020 7424 0007

East Coast Comics UK, 28 Acton Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR33 7LG (high grade, s-want, cc, sae) 01502 578385 (day) 560727 (eve)

Mighty World of Comicana, 237 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2 (dis, cat, CoBRA, cc) 020 7836 5630

Quality Comics, 345 Ditchling Rd, Brighton BN1 6JJ (CoBRA, cc)

Quicksilver Comics, PO Box 73, Ossett WF5 0YQ (s-cat, dis, wants, cc, CoBRA) 01924 270500 (fax: 270919)

Silver Acre Comics, PO Box 114, Chester CH4 8WQ (s-wants, cc) 01244 680 048 (fax 680686)

Post-Silver Age

Comics from 1970 to date: From Bronze Age-Marvel Age-Lead Age up to Platinum Age-Gimmick Age-Image Age. Historians will doubtless eventually decide on a name.

Mighty World of Comicana, 237 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2 (dis, cat, CoBRA, cc) 020 7836 5630

Planet Warehouse (FPI) *formerly Comics Warehouse* PO Box 600, 8 Galliford Road, Maldon, Essex CM9 7XD (w/s, cat, cc, CoBRA) 01621 877244

Quality Comics, 345 Ditchling Rd, Brighton BN1 6JJ (CoBRA, cc)

Tarpaulin Books and Comics, 5 Oak Close, Thetford, Norfolk IP24 3EZ (wants, s-cat) 01842 820139

Hot Comics

Current or key titles, first issues or first appearances of major characters. Investment titles for speculators willing to gamble.

A Place in Space, 101 Church Street, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1RN (wants, cc, dis) 020 8686 2400

Comix-shop. co.uk, 7a High Street, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1JN (wants, cat, cc) 01628 777998

Advance Imports

US comics are not generally available in UK newsagents, except for some sea-freight shipped low-cover price DCs and Marvels, and can only be found through specialists in the rest of the world. The following companies offer air-shipped copies from all of the major US publishers.

Ace Comics, 63/64 High Street, Colchester, Essex (wants, cat, CoBRA, cc) 01206 561912

Avalon Comics, 143 Lavender Hill, London SW11 5QJ (cc, CoBRA) 020 7924 3609

Comix-shop.co.uk, 7a High Street, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 1JN (wants, cat, cc) 01628 777998

86th Floor Comics & Cards, 6 Shipley Common Lane, Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 8TR (dis, cat, cc) 0115 9443009

Forbidden Planet, 71 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1DG (s-cat cc) 020 7497 2150

Gosh! Strips by Mail, 39 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PH 020 7636 1011

Mega-City Comics, 18 Inverness St, Camden Town, London NW1 7HJ (s-cat, cc, CoBRA) 020 7485 9320

Planet Warehouse (FPI) *formerly Comics Warehouse,* PO Box 600, 8 Galliford Road, Maldon, Essex CM9 7XD (w/s, cat, cc, CoBRA) 01621 877244

Red Hot Comics, The Warehouse Block D Unit 8, Glenwood Business Park, Glenwood Place, Glasgow G45 9UH (CoBRA, w/s, dis, wants, cc) tel/fax: 0141 630 0049

Limited Editions

Many high-profile miniseries and one-shots are also available in limited, numbered and often autographed editions (s&n). New titles, to acquire copyright, can also appear in small print-run "ashcan" editions (ash).

Comic Biz, PO Box 7041, London N12 9NF (CoBRA, cc, ash, s&n, cat) 020 8446 3464

Trading Cards

Several mail order dealers carry a range of non-sports cards and related peripherals (files, folders, sleeves).

Beyond Comics, 76 Harlescott Road, Nunhead, London SE15 3BZ (s-cat, s-wants, sae, CoBRA) tel/fax: 020 7564 4213

John McDonald: Non-Sport Trading Cards, 20 Alder Grove, Coatbridge, Lanarkshire ML5 3PT (cat, wants) tel/fax: 01236 433358

Old British Titles

The popularity of old British comics continues to increase as more dealers expand into this area. The following specialise in such titles.

The Book Palace, Jubilee House, Bedwardine Road, Crystal Palace, London SE19 3AP 020 8768 0022

Comic Biz, PO Box 7041, London N12 9NF (wants, CoBRA, cc, cat) 020 8446 3464

Comic Book Postal Auctions Ltd, 40-42 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3ND (cat) 020 7424 0007

Weird Fantasy, 19 Decoy Road, Ormesby, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR29 3LG (s-cat, s-wants, annuals specialist)

Merchandise

Comics, film and TV-related t-shirts, posters, video games, badges, toys, action figures, etc.

Off World: The Sci-Fi Store, 142 Market Halls, Arndale Centre, Luton, Beds LU1 2TP. (specialists in Star Trek, Star Wars and sci-fi collectables) 01582 736256

Sci-Fi Merchandise Direct (FPI) and **Gear for Games (FPI)** Maldon, Essex CM9 4XD (cat) 01621 877222

Original Art

With artists having their originals returned by publishers, an increasing number of pages are now being made available for collectors.

The Book Palace, Jubilee House, Bedwardine Road, Crystal Palace, London SE19 3AP 020 8768 0022

Comic Book Postal Auctions Ltd, 40-42 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3ND (cat) 020 7424 0007

Silver Acre Comics, PO Box 114, Chester CH4 8WQ (s-wants, cc) 01244 680 048 (fax: 680686)

Peripherals

Acid-free protection for comics. Backing boards, protective bags, storage boxes, etc.

The Book Palace, Jubilee House, Bedwardine Road, Crystal Palace, London SE19 3AP 020 8768 0022

Just Comics, 65 Station Road, Warboys, Huntingdon, Cambs PE28 2TH (w/s only, CollectorLine™ distributor) 01487 824895 01487 824896

Planet Warehouse (FPI) *formerly Comics Warehouse,* PO Box 600, 8 Galliford Road, Maldon, Essex CM9 7XD (w/s, cat, cc, CoBRA) 01621 877244

General Fantasy

As well as comics old and new, some suppliers also provide catalogues of multi-media fantasy, covering TV, film, trading cards and toys.

Forbidden Planet Mail Order, 144 Southwark Street, London SE1 0UP (cat) 020 7803 1900 (fax: 7803 1901)

Sci-Fi Merchandise Direct (FPI) and **Gear for Games (FPI)** Maldon, Essex CM9 4XD (cat) 01621 877222

Manga Titles

English language translations of Japanese comics and US titles drawn in the Japanese style.

United Publications, 85 Croydon Road, Keston, Kent BR2 8HU (ind, back, cat, wants, cc) 020 8325 9507

Alternative & Biographical

The following carry an extensive range of biographical and slice-of-life comicbooks and graphic novels (Fantagraphics, Maus, Crumb, Pekar...)

Gosh! Strips by Mail, 39 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3PH (wants) 020 7636 1011

Knockabout Comics, 10 Acklam Road, London W10 5QZ (w/s, s-cat, cc) 020 8969 2945 (fax: 8968 7614)

Page 45, 9 Market Street, Nottingham NG1 6HY 0115 9508045

Comics Auctions

Accepting lots from the general public, comics auctions provide an alternative way for collectors to sell their valuable comics. The following accept items for sale, as well as providing regular catalogues for mail order bids.

Comic Book Postal Auctions Ltd, 40-42 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3ND (cat) 020 7424 0007

Distributors

Anybody considering opening a comics shop or becoming a mail order dealer can obtain further information about the supply of titles from the following who bulk air import US and European comics and related items on a weekly basis.

The Book Palace, Jubilee House, Bedwardine Road, Crystal Palace, London SE19 3AP (graphic novels, art books, comics, remainders, film and TV, popular culture) 020 8768 0022

Diamond Comic Distributors, 2nd Floor, Warton House, 150 High Street, London E15 2NP (US and European comics, cards and related items) 020 8536 5730 (fax: 8536 5736)

Red Route Distribution, Unit 24, 10 Acklam Road, London W10 5QZ (US & European comics/ graphic novels, back-list specialists) 020 8960 5855

Mail Order Dealers:

CI's Mail Order Index is the industry's most cost-effective and highly-targeted way to reach a huge dedicated audience in excess of 40,000 readers every month. It costs only £4 ($6 US) per entry per issue to appear and is bookable in advance as a 6-issue series. Send pre-payment of £24/$36 (plus £4.20 VAT for UK advertisers) per category with your details to:

Comics International, 345 Ditchling Road, Brighton BN1 6JJ

Cheques and international money orders should be made payable to Comics International. Alternatively, payment can be made by credit card, fax: 0(11 44) 1273 566 333 or e-mail: Listings@comicsinternational.com

The letters **(FPI)** after entries indicates that the company is part of **Forbidden Planet International Ltd**

Classified

Advertising terms and conditions

Whether for publication or not, all advertisements must be accompanied by full name, home address and daytime phone number of advertiser.

• All private classified Wants or Announcements ads (comics or card related items only) are free of charge. Maximum 50 words, they will be printed at the publisher's discretion when space permits. *(Only one advertisement can be submitted per letter/per issue so everybody gets a chance to fit in!)*

• FOR SALE ads (and dealer wants/announcements) are charged: (i) General announcements: Stating no issue numbers, prices or titles. Per 50 words (or part thereof) ..... £5.00 ($7.50 US) (ii) List ads: (including specific titles, issues and/or prices. Minimum charge, per 100 words (or part thereof) ..... £10.00 ($15.00 US)

Payment (to Comics International) must accompany advertising copy.

CI Classified, 345 Ditchling Road, Brighton BN1 6JJ

For Sale

For sale: **Batman** 169 (fn) £5.75, 177 (vf-) £7.95; **Batman Family** 1(vf) £6.75; **Black Magic** 3 (nm) £4.95, 9 (nm) £5.25; **Detective Comics** 314 (vg) £5.50; **From Beyond the Unknown** 11 (vf) £5.50, 21 (nm) £2.95, 22 (vf/nm) £2.95, 25 (nm)£2.95; **World's Finest** 161 (fn/vf) £7.50; **Mystery in Space** 85 (vf) £25; **Strange Adventures** 221 (vf) £4.50; **Adventures Into the Unknown** 63 (vg) £5.50, 121 (vg+) £3.75, 127 (vg) £2.75; **Midnight Mystery** 4 (vg) £3.75; **Ghost Manor** first 12 (fn+) £2.25, 15 (vf-) £2.75; **No-Man** 1 (fn+) £6.75; **Atom Archives** volume 1 #22; **Thunder Agents Archives** volume 1 #22. P. Brice, 28 The Ridings, Bishopsworth, Bristol BS13 8NX.

Spider-Man and manga collections for sale. **Spider-Man** #1 (gold) to #36, **Amazing** including #300, **Spectacular**, **Web** and **Deadly Foes** – over 200 comics. Manga includes complete runs of **Sanctuary**, **Ghost in the Shell**, **Battle Angel Alita**, **3*3 Eyes**, **Venus Wars**, **Striker** and **Caravan Kidd**. Also **Gunsmith Cats**, **Crying Freeman**, **Dominion**, **Appleseed**, **Mai the Psychic Girl** and more. **X Files** #1-10, annual #1 and ashcan. Boxed, bagged and back-boarded. Each collection for sale as one lot. Serious offers considered. E-mail for full details: sean_comics@lycos.co.uk. Tel: 01926 850479.

Wanted

Advertisers are reminded that Wanted ads must be no longer than 50 words (including address), and only single insertion private advertisements can be published free of charge.

Wanted: British original art by Frank Bellamy, Mike Noble, Don Lawrence, Gerry Haylock and Ron Turner. Very good prices paid. Also want Neal Adams art, especially his Marvel work. Please telephone Jeff on 01689 898108 or e-mail jeffrey@haythorpe.fsnet.co.uk.

Wanted: **Lovecraft Pantheon** (B.W. Art Folio by Dave Carson) from the 1980s (UK). Also want **Frighteners** (UK horror fiction magazine) companion to **Fear**, published by Newsfield i early 1990s – four issues only. Write to Roger Newson, 32 Rosemary Avenue, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 9HX with details. Or call 01394 277603 after 6pm.

Wanted: All Alan Class, Miller, Thorpe & Porter black and white reprints. Single issues to large collections required. Will buy or trade from my list. P. Brice, 28 The Ridings, Bishopsworth, Bristol BS13 8NX.

Still looking for **Silver Surfer: Return of Thanos**, **Onslaught Book 1**, **Iron Man vs Dr Doom** and **Fantastic Four: Heroes Return** trade paperbacks. Steve Overton, 54 Birling Avenue, Bearsted, Maidstone, Kent ME14 4LN. Tel: 01622 739082. E-mail: teveoverton@aol.com

Wanted in fine condition: **Amazing Heroes** 7-8 and 99 (please offer other available issues); **Comics Journal** 46, 53 and 73; **Alter Ego** 7; **Desperate Dan Book 1979**; **History of Shadow Magazine** by Will Murray. Details of prices, etc to Michael Connolly, 103 Ballylenaghan Heights, Belfast BT8 6WJ (mail only).

Wanted: English 1950s space, horror, crime, superhero, jungle, western comics. Titles include **Spaceman**, **Whiz**, **Master**, **Captain Marvel**, **Black Magic**, **Space Adventures**, **Space Commando**, **Marvelman**, **Planet**, **Captain Valiant**, **Swift Morgan**, **Mystery in Space**, **Marvel Family**, **Speed Kings** and **Strange Worlds** and similar. Please write to Mike Morley, 5 Crompton Avenue, Sprotboro Road, Doncaster DN5 8ED.

Announcements

Fanzine and small press titles must not be offered for sale before being printed. To verify publication, a sample copy must be sent in along with the advertising copy (50 words max). Single bookings only, so everybody gets a chance!

More Than We Seem – Consequences #1 is out now. A 28-page, American format title with colour cover by Brett Weldele. This second **MTWS** miniseries continues the tale. An excellent jumping-on point for new readers. Send cheque for £2.35 (includes p&p) payable to J. West, 2 Mill Lane, Holmes Chapel, Crewe CW4 8AT.

Black Boar Press would like to thank everyone who came by the table at Bristol 2003. It was great to meet everyone who has supported my work over the years. Check out www.blackboar.co.uk for updates on future releases. **Springheeled Jack** #1 available by mail order for £2.80.

Attention Strontium Dog fans! Norms getting you down? Then try **Dogbreath** – the Strontium Dog fanzine. More mangled chromosomes than a Lake Chernobyl fish supper! Issue 10 now out. Send £2.70 cheque or postal order or 10 first class stamps to Dr Bob/A. KEar, 17 Greenbank Avenue West, Easton, Bristol BS5 6EP.

Cartoonists wanted for 'urban **Viz**' magazine. Interested? Then send samples to Black Eye Krew, PO Box 1473, Croydon, Surrey CR9 6WL.

Amusement, adventure and anthropomorphic animals. You'll find it all in **Bahala Na!** #3. A5, 24 pages, black and white, colour cover. Only £1.50 (including p&p). **Bahala Na!** #1 and #2 also available, at 75p each. Get all three for £2! Cheques to David Goodman, 34 Banner Street, Wavertree, Liverpool L15 0HQ. www.bahala-na.co.uk

Lord Thunder, have you heard? **Mondo** – Britain's best and longest-running comic fanzine now has its very own website, packed full of online comicy treats! There's the cover gallery, the **Mondo** babes page, the creator's section, **Mondo** news, **Mondo**'s secret origin and loads more! Join the party at: http://members.lycos.co.uk/mondomag. Bring a bottle and a winning smile!

The O Men 19: The Eagle Award-nominated super-soap continues! Molly Valentine has to make a fateful decision and the Vicious Circle makes its next deadly move. Send £1 to Martin, 19a Trevelyan Road, Tooting, London SW17 9LS. Visit the website (including new comics chatroom!): http://www.theomen.free-online.co.uk

Solar Wind, a new comic for children of the 1970s and '80s from Cosmic Ray! Strips, features, letters, future war, future sport, secret agents, killer nettles and giant radioactive squid! 52 A4 pages for £3 plus 60p postage from P. Scott, 13 Kiln Crescent, Bishop Middleham, County Durham DL17 9AP. E-mail: paulvonscott@yahoo.co.uk. Contributors wanted!

Remembrance Days – a themed anthology from the small press collective Accent UK. With stories from Deva, Engine and M56 Comics. A 28-page, American format greyscale title with colour cover. Send a cheque for £2.25 (includes p&p) payable to J. West to 2 Mill Lane, Holmes Chapel, Crewe CW4 8AT. Accent UK is attending Bristol 2003, see you there.

Limited edition small press-styled promo copies of the comic **Boobytrap** 1. Stories of Automatic Pussy Machines and being spied on by stupid aliens, plus all the usual existentialist undertones and all o' that kinda jazz. Send £1.50 to Bone House Books, 23 Coslany Street, Norwich NR3 3DT. E-mail: bonehousebooks@fsmail.net

Attention all you sci-fi and fantasy comicbook fans! **The Quest of Kazana** is out now! 44 black and white glossy pages of sword and sorcery action with a full-colour cover for £4 or €4. Send cheques to Edward Doyle, 53 Irish Street, Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford, Ireland.

Comic Societies

Join The Eagle Society, dedicated to the memory of Britain's National Strip Cartoon Weekly – The Eagle 1950-1969. For just £17 per year (cheques should be made payable to The Eagle Society) members receive our quarterly journal **Eagle Times**, as well as the chance to attend social gatherings and meet original Eagle contributors. Write to the membership secretary: Keith Howard, 25a Station Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 2UA. Or e-mail: Richard.Sheaf@uk.nestle.com

Comics Creators Guild: The Future of Comics in our Hands. Industry veterans and aspiring professionals. Join the largest comics organisation in Europe. Monthly meetings, newsletter, Comics Forum, exclusive publications, free legal advice, special discounts and more. For further information please contact: Comics Creators Guild, 22 St James Mansions, West End Lane, West Hampstead, London NW6 2AA. www.comicscreators.org.uk

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It's been tried and tested for over 10 years and it's still going strong...

Comics International's *Classified* section has turned more than one £5 "For Sale" advertiser into a big-time full page dealer.

One of the first-read sections of the magazine for both dealers and fans, *Classified* offers you the opportunity to add a part time job to boost your finances.

Most comic fans have unwanted titles taking up valuable space...

... A loft which is in need of clearing.

... A spare room which is no longer spare.

... A garage which is pining for a car.

Classified can help you not only clear that space, but earn you money while doing so. More than 4,500 such ads have been placed on this page, with regular dealers coming back each issue.

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So, what are you waiting for? Everybody else to jump in first?

... It's down to you!

Comic & Card Events

FREE ADMISSION TO ALL SHOWS
DOORS OPEN 12 NOON

NEW National Photo Gallery Now On Our Website

THE NATIONAL COLLECTORS MARKETPLACE

2003 SUNDAY JUNE 8

ROYAL NATIONAL HOTEL
BEDFORD WAY
LONDON WC1

2000 AD
ACTION FIGURES
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POKEMON
SILVER AGE COMICS
SPORTS CARDS
SCI FI/FANTASY
STAR TREK
STAR WARS
TOYS
TRADING CARD SUPPLIES
VIDEOS

The National, with 160 tables is the largest regular marketplace for comicbook and trading card collectors in the U.K. You will also find a whole range of related materials including Sci-fi, Fantasy, Film, TV and Toys fromleading British & international dealers.

HOW TO GET THERE. BUS: 68, 91, 168 or 188 to Woburn Place. UNDERGROUND: Piccadilly Line to Russell Square. NATIONAL RAIL: Euston and Kings Cross are within walking distance of the venue.

FUTURE DATE: 3RD AUGUST 2003

Events @ CAMDEN CENTRE
Bidborough St, London WC1

COMICBOOK MARKETPLACE

2003 SUNDAY JULY 6

FOR AMERICAN COMICBOOKS AND CULT COLLECTABLES

OVER 90 DEALERS TABLES!

The Comicbook Marketplace is held six times a year at the Camden Centre and is just a few minutes walk from Euston, Kings Cross and St. Pancras stations. There are more than ninety tables with over 1,000,000 comicbooks, magazines and trading cards on sale, including S.F., Fantasy, Film and T.V. related items from Britain's top dealers.

HOW TO GET THERE. BUS: 10, 17, 30, 45, 46, 63, 73, 91, 214, or 259 to Kings Cross/Camden Town Hall. UNDERGROUND: Circle, Metropolitan, Piccadilly or Victoria Line to Kings Cross. BRITISH RAIL: Euston, Kings Cross and St. Pancras are within walking distance of the venue.

FUTURE DATE: 31ST AUGUST 2003

CARD MART

2003 SUNDAY JULY 13

FOR SPORTS, NON-SPORTS AND COLLECTABLE GAMING CARDS

THE NATION'S TOP TRADING CARD EVENT

Dealers: for table availability phone 020 747 66 873

www.comicmart.co.uk

Events

A summary of all the events advertised this issue

June

14/6 Nottingham: Comic Mart & Card Show, Victoria Leisure Centre, Gedling Street, Nottingham ..... (p48)
15/6 Gloucester: Sci-Fi & Comic Collector's Fair, Leisure Centre, Town Centre, Gloucester ..... (p23)
21/6 Manchester: Comic Mart & Card Show, Sachas Hotel, Tib Street, Piccadilly, Manchester ..... (p48)
22/6 Liverpool: Comic Mart & Card Show, Gladstone Hotel, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool ..... (p48)
29/6 Cardiff: Sci-Fi & Comic Collector's Fair, Jury's Hotel, Mary Ann Street (p23)

July

5/7 Leeds: Comic Mart & Card Show, Leeds Metropolitan University, Brunswick Hall, Merrion Way, Leeds ..... (p48)
6/7 London: Comicbook Marketplace, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street (p58)
12/7 Birmingham: Comic Mart & Card Show, Carrs Lane Church Centre, Carrs Lane, Birmingham ..... (p48)
13/7 London: Card Mart, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street ..... (p58)
19/7 Sheffield: Comic Mart & Card Show, Main Hall, Sheffield Hallam University, Howard Street ..... (p48)
20/7 Bristol: Sci-Fi & Comic Collector's Fair, Holiday Inn, Victoria Street .... (p23)
26-27/7 Birmingham: Memorabilia '03, Birmingham NEC ..... (p46)
27/7 Newport: Sci-Fi & Comic Collector's Fair, Leisure Centre, City Centre . (p23)

August

2/8 Glasgow: Scottish Comics, Card & Collectables Fair, James Moir Hall (Mitchell Theatre) Granville Street ..... (p45)
3/8 London: The National Comicbook Marketplace and Card Mart, The Royal National Hotel, Bedford Way ..... (p58)
9/8 Leeds: Comic Mart & Card Show, Leeds Metropolitan University, Brunswick Hall, Merrion Way, Leeds ..... (p48)
10/8 Gloucester: Sci-Fi & Comic Collector's Fair, Leisure Centre, Town Centre, Gloucester ..... (p23)
16/8 Manchester: Comic Mart & Card Show, Sachas Hotel, Tib Street, Piccadilly, Manchester ..... (p48)
17/8 Cardiff: Sci-Fi & Comic Collector's Fair, Jury's Hotel, Mary Ann Street (p23)
23-24/8 Glasgow: Memorabilia '03, Glasgow SECC ..... (p46)
30/8 Nottingham: Comic Mart & Card Show, Victoria Leisure Centre, Gedling Street, Nottingham ..... (p48)
31/8 London: Comicbook Marketplace, Camden Centre, Bidborough Street (p58)

September

6/9 Newcastle: Comic Mart & Card Show, University of Northumbria, Students' Union Ballroom, Sandyford Road ..... (p48)
13/9 Leeds: Comic Mart & Card Show, Leeds Metropolitan University, Brunswick Hall, Merrion Way, Leeds ..... (p48)
14/9 Somerset: Sci-Fi & Comic Collector's Fair, Cheese & Grain Hall, Town Centre, Frome ..... (p23)
20/9 Birmingham: Comic Mart & Card Show, Carrs Lane Church Centre, Carrs Lane, Birmingham ..... (p48)
20/9 Glasgow: Scottish Comics, Card & Collectables Fair, James Moir Hall (Mitchell Theatre) Granville Street ..... (p45)
21/9 Newport: Sci-Fi & Comic Collector's Fair, Leisure Centre, City Centre . (p23)
27/9 Manchester: Comic Mart & Card Show, Sachas Hotel, Tib Street, Piccadilly, Manchester ..... (p48)
28/9 Liverpool: Comic Mart & Card Show, Gladstone Hotel, Lord Nelson Street, Liverpool ..... (p48)

October

11/10 Sheffield: Comic Mart & Card Show, Main Hall, Sheffield Hallam University, Howard Street ..... (p48)
19/10 Bristol: Sci-Fi & Comic Collector's Fair, Holiday Inn, Victoria Street .... (p23)
25/10 Newcastle: Comic Mart & Card Show, University of Northumbria, Students' Union Ballroom, Sandyford Road ..... (p48)

Please note: the above listing of UK comics, trading card and related events is free to Comics International display advertisers only.

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Sunday 11-4	

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ADVENTURE COMICS 300 (1st full Legion)..... £38(g) or £85(fn-)
AMAZING FANTASY 15 (1st Spider-Man).....£1100(vg-) £1200(vg)
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN 1 (CGC 6.4 fn+)..... £3,200.00
AQUAMAN 1 (first series, 1962) fn-.....£100.00
... And that's only a fraction of our key comics beginning with A

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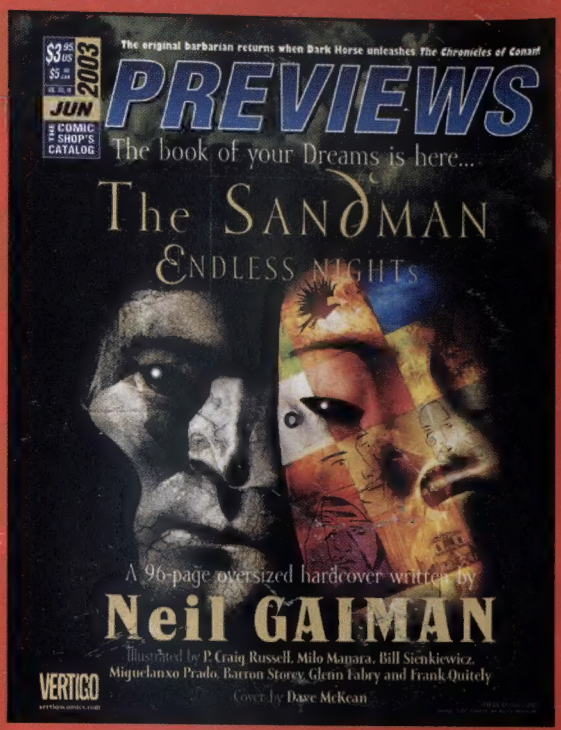
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2003
JUN
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